STUDIES IN COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY



by

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INTRODUCTION

It has been said that there is a radical difference between the Western and the Eastern methods of approach in the pursuit of philosophy. Western philosophers are generally distinguished from the Eastern by their exclusively rational approach to the ultimate reality of the universe, and in their paying not much attention to or being totally indifferent to the method of intuition. Some historians of Western philosophy have gone even to the extent of dubbing all Eastern thought as shot through with 'faith' and not deserving of inclusion in such a chronicle. No doubt, there were some exceptionally great mystics in the West too, who proclaimed the possibility of an intuitional approach to Truth by transcending the realms of sense, understanding and reason. But they were mostly the targets of suspicion and a superior attitude on the part of the logical thinkers. On a study of the history of philosophy in the West we come across variegated types of philosophers who made diverse approaches to the problems of life and established several schools of philosophy which generally comprehend vast fields of observation, investigation and research, such as logic, epistemology, metaphysics, aesthetics, ethics, psychology and mysticism. In modern times, however, the implications of the discoveries in physical science have practically become a part of the study of philosophy. There are those in India, however, who think that an attempt to study and understand the methods and conclusions of these thinkers in the West is just energy misspent, holding, as they do, the view that the method of faith and intuition in philosophy mostly followed in India is the only practicable, useful and trustworthy way. We need not take any one side of these extreme views of the traditional conservatives of either the West or the East. Knowledge is neither Western nor Eastern, but universal. It is also not true that the Indian philosophers abrogated reason as absolutely futile, though they emphasised its natural limits. There are certain schools

in India which establish their systems exclusively on rational grounds without discrediting the value and need of intuition in any way. The philosopher Shankara, who was an ardent adherent to authority and revelation, made full use of the powers of reason in founding his stupendous system and said that the Vedanta is ornamented by the fact that its strength lies not merely in appealing to revelation but reason and experience also, adding, however, a note that reason unbridled which goes counter to revelation should be rejected as misleading. In our study of philosophy, we may make use of methods and conclusions of the systems of the West in gaining mastery over the philosophies of Indian seers and sages. The philosophy of the Vedanta is characterised by integrality in its meaning, method and scope, built on the foundations of the most incisive logical analysis, and it rejects nothing as totally useless, though it accepts nothing without sifting it through the sieve of direct experience in super-sensuous intuition. It would certainly add to our knowledge to make a comparative study of the philosophies of some of the great Western thinkers and of the philosophy of the Vedanta, which is the culmination of Indian Thought. We may begin with the great Greek sage, Socrates.

SOCRATES

Socrates, the wise man of Greece, concerned himself mostly with practical problems of life, because mere metaphysical speculation bereft of the application thereof in life he considered futile. He said: "The student of human learning expects to make something of his studies for the benefit of himself or others as he likes. Do these explorers into the divine operations hope that when they have discovered by what forces the various phenomena occur, they will create winds and waters at will and fruitful seasons? Will they manipulate these and the like to suit their needs?"

The view of the Vedanta is the same regarding metaphysics as long as it is confined to the province of reason alone, which exclusively moves along the channels dug out by sense-perception. It was the view of the Buddha, too. Reason cannot give us genuine knowledge of reality. But the Vedanta recognises the value of metaphysics when it is expected to lead one to the final realisation of the Divine Being. In fact no one can live without a metaphysics of life. It may be a good metaphysics or a bad one; but that there is one which everyone follows in leading his life no one can deny. Rational conviction of the nature of Reality intensifies one's faith in it. We cannot go far with mere airy ethics which has no metaphysical background. Ethics is always based on metaphysics. No one can be convinced as to the value of goodness, virtue or righteousness without being assured of a goal towards which they are expected to direct a person and on whose principles they are ultimately based. Whether Socrates himself had a personal metaphysics of his own or not we cannot clearly say. But from the writings of Plato we understand that he had one, though he did not make explicit mention of the same, perhaps in view of the fact that it would not be of much benefit to the people of his time. Anyway, a metaphysics for life is an absolute necessity, though we need not label it with that frightening term from which people

incapable of hard thinking are likely to shy away. This will be clear from a study of the philosophy of the Vedanta.

Socrates sought a rational basis for ethics and morality, for the practice of right and wrong, good and bad. He did not agree with the Sophists that 'man is the measure of all things' in the sense that what pleases man is right for him and that there is no such thing as the universally good. To Socrates, knowledge is the highest good or virtue. A knowledge of virtue is to precede its practice. A rational understanding of the nature and meaning of goodness, self-control, truth, wisdom and justice is the pre-condition of their being practised in life. It was the principle of Socrates that no man is voluntarily bad or involuntarily good. Evil is the result of ignorance. Those who have right knowledge cannot go counter to the canons of virtue.

The Vedanta is in agreement with Socrates in holding the view that the practice of virtue should be preceded by a rational understanding of the implications and the nature of virtue. It says that *viveka* (understanding) should precede *vairagya* (dispassion) and the practice of *shatsampat* (six ethical virtues), which means that an aspirant after *moksha* (liberation), or the final salvation of the soul, should have a profound discernment of the difference that exists between the real and the unreal, in order that his renunciation of the unreal and the practice of self-control may have meaning and value. There cannot be true renunciation or self-control without a correct understanding of the truths implied in their practice. Knowledge precedes action of all kinds. The good is a universal principle and not a private fancy. This is the opinion of both Socrates and the Vedanta. To both knowledge is the highest good, but the Vedanta gives a warning to people, which we do not see Socrates doing, that theoretical knowledge is not virtue and that it is possible for a man of such shallow knowledge to turn to evil and to perpetrate wrong. It is common that people know that they should not tell a lie, and yet many of them do not speak the truth. This is

the inscrutable illusion covering the consciousness of man, says the Vedanta. People know that they should not hurt others, and yet they hurt others in spite of the knowledge of the wrong of hurting others. The knowledge of the importance of virtue does not deter people from moving to the evil side of things. The question often raised against the dictum of Socrates that knowledge is virtue is: why do people pursue the wrong path in spite of their knowledge of the right? Yes, we can defend Socrates by saying that such a wise man as he was could not have meant by knowledge some theoretical opinion but knowledge including a perfect discipline of the will. Those who have genuine knowledge of Truth cannot act wrongly, for virtue is for one's own interest, joy and honour. Virtue and happiness mean the same thing but one cannot be virtuous without knowledge.

Socrates says: "I do nothing but to go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your person or properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul. I tell you that virtue is not given by money, but that from virtue comes money, and every other good, public as well as private."

And this is what the Vedanta holds. It is proper to go on persuading and convincing people so that they may move along the path of righteousness which leads to the highest good, viz., liberation of the soul and to teach the disciples to go on with this work of the dissemination of spiritual knowledge throughout the world so that peace and joy may reign supreme and the life of man may be crowned with blessedness. This is what all great men have done and do even today. This is the expression of the irresistible urge of the spiritual consciousness to recognise itself in every entity of the universe, which all are, after all, its own organic parts objectified through sense.

PLATO

To Plato, worthy disciple of Socrates, philosophy is the 'dear delight', which aims at the knowledge of the Universal Being—Reality. Sense-perception cannot reveal the nature of Reality but gives only appearance. True knowledge is knowledge that knows itself as knowledge, knowledge based on reasons, knowledge that is sure of its own ground. Evidently, Plato here means by knowledge that which is not dependent on its contents or external objects and which corresponds with the ideal consciousness of the Reality propounded in the Vedanta. Consciousness, to the Vedanta, if it is to be genuine, knows itself alone as the Absolute Being. This knowledge is above sense-perception and is identical with existence itself. It is '*chit*' (Consciousness) which is the same as '*sat*' (Existence). Plato's vision of the genuine knowledge of True Being is the Indian sage's Darshana (vision) of the Absolute.

To Plato, love of truth is aroused by the contemplation of the beautiful ideas. Contemplation of beauty is the way to the contemplation of Truth. Love of Truth creates a distaste for sense-objects and raises us beyond sense-perception, from the particular to the Idea, the Universal. The Idea or the Notion is inherent in the Soul, it does not come from sense-experience by way of induction. Man, to him, is the measure of things, for in man's soul are imbedded universal principles or ideas which are *a priori*. If, by the contemplation of beauty, Plato means dwelling upon objects of sense, which appear beautiful to perception, the Vedanta would deny that such a contemplation is the way to the knowledge of Reality. For beauty is not objectively existent and it has its being in certain relations brought about by the contact of the subject and the object. Beauty is a relative value and not an absolute principle. Here, we discover a great difference between the Greek conception of the meaning and value of beauty and the Indian view thereon. The constitution of beauty changes itself when the constitution of the perceiver of the beauty is changed in relation to the objective conditions which play an

important role in the enjoyment of all aesthetic values. But, if Plato means by beauty the Reality underlying things, the Vedanta has no objection to accepting that the contemplation of beauty is the way to the realisation of Truth.

The love of Truth mentioned by Plato, which is said to bring about a dispassion for objects of sense is akin to the *nitya-anitya-vastu-viveka* (discrimination between the real and the unreal) mentioned in the Vedanta, as the precondition of real *vairagya* (distaste for sense-objects). It is this love of Truth, devotion to the Eternal, that gives life and value to the *sadhana* or spiritual practice undertaken by the seeker of knowledge. It is this, again, that raises the individual to the Universal by bringing about a total transfiguration in the individual. The Vedanta says, as does Plato, that this *viveka* (understanding), the higher discrimination, does not come through the senses but wells up from within the Soul when the mind is sufficiently purified by freedom from the lower appetites. *Viveka* is *a priori* knowledge in a higher sense.

Knowledge, according to Plato, is the correspondence of thought and Reality, or Being. The universal idea of Truth, goodness and beauty, for example, must have objects or realities corresponding to them. The idea is an ideal which must be real and have an existence, independent of some thought. This highest rule or Truth is the object of genuine knowledge, different from mere opinion in regard to the world which is changing, fleeting, transient, mere appearance. True Being is unchangeable, Eternal. Here Plato brings Heraclitus and Parmenides together and transcends them in his higher idealism. Plato declares that knowledge of Eternal Being is true knowledge. This knowledge is identified with thought, conceptual thought, which alone is said to grasp the Eternal. True knowledge is conceptual knowledge. According to the Vedanta, lower, relative knowledge consists in the correspondence of thought and its object, but in the higher, universal knowledge there is no correspondence but

identity, for, in universal knowledge the knower and the known are one. The Vedanta would accept rather the coherence theory in its epistemology than the theory of correspondence, as far as trans-empirical knowledge is concerned. But it has no objection to the correspondence theory as far as empirical knowledge is concerned. The Vedanta metaphysics accepts, in agreement with Plato's, that the objects of thought cannot be absolutely unreal and that they ought to have realities behind them. This is true even of ordinary thought, for all thought in the world of experience is tremendously influenced by the materials supplied by the senses. The unchangeable Eternal of Plato is the *kutastha-nitya* (immutable Reality) of the Vedanta, to which true knowledge is not conceptual or mere thought, for such knowledge consists in Self-realisation where thought expires in experience.

In his famous '*Doctrine of Ideas'* Plato holds that the Ideas behind particulars are the essences, the substantial realities existing as the archetypes of all things. These Ideas are not mere thoughts in the minds of men, but are independent, and even the Thought of God is dependent on these eternal transcendent essences which exist prior to all things, unaffected by the changes characteristic of the appearances. The particulars of Plato are copies or imperfect representations of the universal Ideas. The universals such as horseness, manness, etc. exist independent of horses, men, etc. These ideas constitute a well-ordered relational cosmos and do not merely form some disordered chaos. There is an organic interrelatedness among these Ideas which are all logically arranged to be finally subsumed under the Supreme Idea, the Idea of the Good. The Idea of the Good is the ultimate cause of all causes and is the absolutely real Being. Truth, Reality and the Good are the same. Plato holds that the unity of the Good is meaningful only when there is plurality, and that there can be no plurality without unity. The universe is a logical system of Ideas, an organic unity of spiritual entities. This system is determined by the absolute

purpose of the Idea of the Good. Philosophy is conceived by Plato to be the pursuit of the knowledge of the Idea of the Good in this rational system of a moral and spiritual cosmos.

It is natural that a doubt should arise in the mind of a careful student of philosophy as to the validity of Plato's view that the universals such as horseness, etc., are prior to and exist independent of particulars, such as horses, etc. We arrive at the idea of the universal, e.g. horseness, by perceiving through the senses particular objects, e.g. horses. It would thus appear that we arrive at the universal through the particulars by way of induction. Unless Plato is accepted to have had a supersensuous intuition of universals, his theory of the universals as preceding the particulars cannot be logically established. Plato says his ideas are not mere thoughts existing in men's brains but are independent realities. There is no way of justifying this view when the universals are confined to the abstract notions which people have of the general behind particular objects of sense-perception. The Vedanta would not agree with Plato in holding the view that even God's Thought is 'dependent' on these universal Ideas, though God's Thought is the cause of the manifestation of the physical universe, which process the Vedanta terms Ishvara-*Srishti,* and which becomes the basis of men's having the notion or idea of universals. If the particulars should be mere imperfect copies or shadows of the universal Ideas, the latter should not be confined to any faculty that is present in the particulars, including men, but should be given extramental realities ranging beyond human perception. This is exactly what Plato does, but he seems to identify these universal Ideas with these notions of the general, such as horseness, which cannot be given an independent reality of their own. Plato's Ideas can be independent realities only when they constitute the very stuff of God's Thought and not something on which even God's Thought is to depend. If the universal Ideas are not God's Thoughts, they must be men's thoughts, in which case they cannot be eternal realities.

It is not necessary for the Vedanta that the unity of the Real should be based on plurality, for, to it, plurality belongs to the relative world which does not affect the Real even in the least. There is no permanency in plurality, and what is not permanent is not real. Even according to Plato, the rational universe is an organic system in which case it is necessary to posit a universal consciousness existing as the Soul of the universe. It is hard to understand how the unity of this Soul can be dependent upon plurality of any kind. We can try to bring about a reconciliation between Plato and the Vedanta only by making the Ideas of Plato Ideas in the Mind of God, which are causes even of human individuality and not such universals as horseness etc., which are mere abstract notions. And we have also to understand by the Good not the ethical principle of goodness but the Absolute justification behind it, the supreme good and blessedness of all beings.

Plato's world of sense is not an illusion created by the senses but is reality of a much lower order than the Ideas. To the Vedanta, the world is Ishvara-*srishti*, a creation of God, and is *vyavaharika-satta* or empirical reality, which has the value of practical workability. The world is not an illusion created by the mind of man as some extreme subjectivists hold, but is a reality co-existent with the body of the Virat, the grossest appearance of the Creative Consciousness. The Vedanta makes a distinction between cosmic creation and individual imagination, technically termed Ishvara-*srishti* and *jiva-srishti*. It is the imagination of the individual that is the cause of its bondage and not the mere existence of the universe as an object of perception. To the Vedanta, the world and the individual are co-relative realities which arise simultaneously and also vanish simultaneously in the realisation of the Absolute. The two do not have between them the relation of the superior and the inferior or of cause and effect. The individual is a part of the universe and it is only the imaginations of the former that can be called illusions, not the presence of the latter.

Plato posits another principle, namely, matter, different from the Ideas, which forms the appearances constituting phenomenal experience. By itself matter or the sense-world is qualityless, nothing; it derives values from the reality of the Ideas which give form and value to it. To the Vedanta, the phenomenal world consists of *nama-rupa*, names and forms, and has by itself no other quality, no essence or substantiality other than *satchidananda*, or existence-knowledge-bliss, which is the threefold constitutive essence and sole reality underlying all things. The world is dependent on Brahman, and independently the world is nothing. Here Plato and the Vedanta are one.

The diversity of the material world is, according to Plato, the dissipated appearance of the eternal Ideas which range beyond sense and opinion. The phenomenal world is real to the extent it is informed by the Ideas. Like the *prakriti* of the Samkhya, Plato's matter is a realm of unconscious activity and blind causality, which is raised to the status of being guided by a conscious purpose and having an intelligent teleological movement by the interference of the rational Ideas which act here in a manner akin to that of the *purushas* of the Samkhya. But the Samkhya holds that matter is an eternal entity, while the matter of Plato is valueless without the eternal informing Ideas. What is real is consciousness and the degree to which consciousness manifests itself in the appearances determines the degree of reality put on by the appearances.

Plato appears to feel that matter is an unwilling self of the Ideas. In the philosophy of the Vedanta, matter is not an entity isolated from the realm of eternity but is merely an appearance of the Eternal through space, time and causation. The activities of the material world are all consciously directed towards the fulfilment of the cosmic purpose of Self-realisation. Matter is not an unwilling self but a willing cooperator in the grand scheme of the cosmos. Matter appears to be an impediment when the Spirit is forgotten,

but when one consciously and deliberately puts forth efforts towards the realisation of the Spirit in one's own self, one would discover that the material universe becomes a stepping stone in the process of this grand ascent. One would however be inclined to say that Plato's system smacks of dualism, a division between the Ideal world and the real world, between the eternal and the temporal, though it is to be accepted that his system is a perfectly spiritual one. Ardent followers of Plato, however, would feel that his system is non-dualistic on account of his insistence on the sole reality of the Idea of the Good. But this is rather an interpretation than a discovery. All depends upon how much reality Plato credited to his phenomenal world of appearances.

In his cosmology, Plato comes nearer to the Nyaya and the Vaiseshika philosophies than the other schools. His Demiurge merely fashions a world out of matter and mind which exist already. The Demiurge is not the actual creator of the world, but an architect like the God of the Nyaya and the Vaiseshika, an extra-cosmic being needed just to bring the existing material together to form the world. The ideas which exist as the contents of the creative mind of the God of Plato may be compared with the subtle variegated modes manifest in the Hiranyagarbha of the Vedanta. But Hiranyagarbha is not merely a fashioner of the material existing as the subtle universe, but this universe constitutes the very body of Hiranyagarbha. Sometimes Plato calls these Ideas "That which is", the only reality. But as long as these Ideas reveal plurality in them the attribution of absolute reality to them is hardly tenable. The Hiranyagarbha of the Vedanta is not the ultimate reality but a cosmic principle which explains the unity underlying the diversified universe but itself falls under the relative categories of phenomenal existence. Further, Plato declares the dynamic character of the Ideas, their activity and creativity, which makes it clear that they are far from being the unchangeable eternal.

Plato's Demiurge creates a World-Soul which imparts to the universe the character of an organism. The World-Body came into being after the pattern of the image of the Ideas which impress their stamp on the World-Soul. All these bear striking resemblances to the threefold appearance of the Creator as Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha and Virat in the Vedanta. It is, however, curious that the World-Soul of Plato is stigmatised as an evil principle, though Plato shrinks from emphasising this point too much and would easily assign the seeds of imperfection to man himself.

Plato holds that knowledge is not a fresh acquisition of any new thing but a reminiscence, an anamnesis, of a previous knowledge. Sensation is not the source of knowledge; sensation merely incites the rational part of the soul to function as knowledge which is hidden in it. The soul has knowledge in it even before it comes in contact with objects through sense. It is the view of Plato that the soul has forgotten its original essential nature of the knowledge of Ideas and is only reminded of this knowledge when it contacts the copies of these Ideas in the world of sense. Knowledge is a rediscovery of what is present within but has been forgotten on account of the soul's encasement in material body. When the lower nature is overcome, the soul rediscovers its past glory of true inborn knowledge in a disembodied state. Plato thus establishes the pre-existence of the soul and its immortality.

The Vedanta holds in agreement with Plato that there is a magazine of knowledge and power within us already. We have only to discover and realise it through deep meditation, and, metaphysically, it accepts that all that we know here is merely an imperfect representation of the Absolute. But it would not accept that in sense-perception there is any conscious recognition of the super-sensuous Reality. The embodied soul is not reminded of the metempirical entities in its empirical perception; what it sees is merely a presentation of material bodies which it confuses with

Reality. There is no remembrance whatsoever of the Eternal in sense-perception, though metaphysically it is true that all empirical urge is a distorted shadow of one's love for the Eternal.

Plato says that the perception of sensuous beauty is an indication of the aspiration of the soul for Immortal Being. A memory of the Ideal Beauty is aroused in the soul in sense-love. The Vedanta, too, recognises the significance of sense-love in life and it can become a step towards the Eternal, when the process is consciously directed. But sensuous beauty is a distorted and untrustworthy shadow of Divine Being. It is true that the reality of the Divine is reflected in all things; but what attracts the embodied soul in sensuous beauty is not the Divine element but the possibility of a satisfaction of the imperfect side of its nature through finding and contacting its counterpart in the beautiful object. Beauty, as such, is never seen; only the objectification of desire is seen in the beloved objects. It is what the Vedanta calls *jiva srishti* that creates beauty in things; but Plato makes it a part of Ishvara-*srishti* or extramental reality. There cannot be the perception of beauty without subject-object-relationship, and in Eternal Being all relations are merged in unity. Yes; the Supreme Being is present in all things as their sole reality, but it is not what is beheld in sense-perception, though it is to be conceded that any perception would be impossible but for this reality behind things. Beauty is the result of the interaction of the modes of the incompleteness of human experience and their corresponding counterparts, which brings about an experience of equilibrium, filledness, an all-possessing feeling of repose, a sense of symmetry, rhythm, harmony, system, order and unity, which are ultimately the characteristics of the Absolute, but the Absolute is not 'consciously' experienced in aesthetic enjoyment, for here the characteristics of the Absolute are objectified and thus robbed of their true value, for the Absolute is realised in non-objective experience alone. Beauty is the reflection of the Absolute in sense-experience

when the latter reveals a harmony caused by the contact of the subject with its counter-correlative; but this experience cannot lead to a realisation of the Absolute unless one is conscious of what is happening really when there is a perception of beauty, and one deliberately converts it into a stepping stone in the higher ascent.

ARISTOTLE

Aristotle is famous as a pioneer in the development of the science of logic. In his blending together of the methods of induction and deduction he brings about a reconciliation between the theories of empiricism and rationalism. Knowledge, according to Aristotle, begins with sense-perception and so logic commences with induction from the particular to the universal, but the universal is prior to the particulars in its nature though it is arrived at later by human reasoning. The whole is prior to its parts and is the purpose to be realised by the parts. The knowledge of the particulars in full requires a knowledge of the universal. Deduction is the way to the right knowledge of things but the way to deduction is induction. The universals from which we deduce the particulars are to be roused in our reason by means of sense-perception and induction. There would be no knowledge without sense-perception but the certainty of this experience is assured only when its truths are present in the reason potentially.

Aristotle's logic is a great aid in understanding his metaphysics, which he calls the first philosophy. Metaphysics is the search for Reality. Aristotle sees a transcendency in the nature of Plato's Ideas and their unrelatedness to the world of matter. He understands that there is a dualism in Plato's philosophy and tries to bridge the gulf between the Ideas or the Forms and the matter of sense-perception. The Idea or the Form cannot be independent of matter, nor can be matter without a form directing it. The objects of the world are real substances, not imperfect copies of the Platonic universal Ideas. The reality of the objects, however, is the forms, the general qualities of the genus to which they belong. The form or the Platonic Idea is in matter, not outside it; immanent, and not transcendent.

To Aristotle, the visible is changeable. Things of the world change; there is evolution but there is some element in them which persists through all change. The changing qualities are predicated of this persistent element. This

principle underlying change Aristotle concludes to be matter. Matter does not change with change. It persists through all change. Matter is never without qualities and there is no such thing as formless matter in the world. There is a togetherness in the existence of matter, qualities and forms. In change the form does not change; matter puts on different qualities which is called change. We must be careful in using the word 'form' when we are studying Aristotle; for he means by form not the visible shape of an object but the Platonic Idea that underlies the shape of the object, as its shaping form, which gives it reality. When matter appears to change it is not the previous form that changes itself into another form, but a different form altogether begins to give shape to matter. Thus matter goes on changing forms. These forms, like the Purushas of the Sankhya, are ever-persistent and not newly created at any time. And, like the Sankhya, Aristotle says that matter and the forms are both eternal principles, never destroyed. Matter, the ever-persistent, which assumes different conditions in change on account of the presence of different qualities, and the forms which animate it, constitute the world. But qualities, Aristotle holds, are real existence. All things, in Aristotle, are compelled by an inner necessity to outgrow themselves and realise their purpose in a form which exists as the potential in matter. Everything is matter and form at the same time, the higher being the form of the lower and the lower the matter of the higher. There is an evolution of the higher form from the lower, which exists as the matter or potentiality of the higher. Form is the total force residing in a thing as the very essence of being, doing and becoming. There is no external mechanical cause in the unfoldment of the actuality of things but the real cause is the internal necessity which works with due reference to the type to which the things belong. When a thing develops fully it is said to have reached its form or realisation of true being; its purpose here is fulfilled. Every change in a thing is guided by a purpose and end, a goal which is the actualisation of the higher form. The potential becomes actual at every stage.

Matter has a tendency, a desire or a love to realise its form, and here it co-operates with the function of the necessity directed by the great purpose which consists in the realisation of the form. Aristotle thinks that matter sometimes does not cooperate with its form, works independently and opposes the unfoldment of the form; this is offered as the reason for the differences, monstrosities and defects detectable in the world.

The process of the realisation of the purpose of the form passes through the stages of a fourfold causation; the potential form or the idea lying at the root of action which is the formal cause; the matter or the basis of action which is the material cause; the instrument or that through which the action is done, which is the efficient cause; and the purpose to be realised in action which is the final cause. When man works on a material these four causes are visible but in organic nature the instrument of action is identical with the form and the unrealised also is the form, so that only form and matter remain in the end as the only two causes. Every form is guided by a purpose towards which it moves, the realisation of the highest form of the species which are held to be unalterable. The form, like the Purusha of the Sankhya, is responsible for the teleological motion of matter. Motion is the process of the actualisation of the potential, and this motion is caused in matter by the mere presence of the form. Motion is not mechanistic, but teleological.

Now comes the crowning part of Aristotle's philosophy. The process of motion makes Aristotle posit God as the final Unmoved Mover, a logical necessity which alone can put an end to an infinite recourse in our search for a final cause of all motion. This final cause should be causeless, unmoved but moving all things. This God is eternal, Form without matter, Pure Spirit or Intelligence, for if there is matter in God, He would be subject to motion. God is the Supreme Purpose of all things. The world longs for God whose presence is the cause of all motion. The desire to realise Him is implied in the

desire to realise one's essential being, viz., the form. The God of Aristotle is in some respects like the God of Hegel who is the Absolute Reality, the being which is the meaning, purpose and value of the whole universe. But in another sense Aristotle's God is different from Hegel's, for the former has no need for matter, while the latter needs the world. The God of Aristotle is free from all psychological functions known to man; He has perfect intelligence whose action consists in mere Being and Knowing. He is Omniscient and His knowledge is complete, non-rational, immediate, and not a successive process. He is the Goal of life. God, the Unmoved, moves the world not as an external agent, but as 'the beloved moves the lover', a welling sum of force that moves the totality of being by its very existence. Grand philosophy of Aristotle! The saying that all men are born either Platonists or Aristotelians is not without some truth.

Sometimes Aristotle's form looks like the Idea of Plato and at other times like the Elan Vital of Bergson. The forms of Aristotle are many. They are only changed in the change which matter assumes, as if there is a jump from one form to another, with an unbridged gulf between the two forms. The view that in the changes assumed by matter different unrelated forms begin to inform it is untenable, for then matter would find no link to connect itself with the next higher form. And yet Aristotle makes the higher form evolve out of the lower in which it exists potentially. It follows from this that the higher form is latent in all the lower ones, and God the Highest Form is in everything hidden as the unrealised actual. This shows that there ought to be, really, only one Form, namely God, which is gradually unfolded and actualised in evolution, and not many forms which seem to have no relation to each other. Aristotle's forms are the different degrees in which the Supreme Form, or God, is revealed in gradual realisation by the process of evolution. The use of the plural viz., *forms*, in regard to the degrees of the revelation of the sole reality of the Supreme Form would create a confusion in the minds of students. But if Aristotle

really means that there is a plurality of forms, his metaphysics cannot avoid the defect of discrepancy and the charge of holding contradictory and untenable positions. In the philosophy of the Vedanta, there is only one reality, the Absolute, and all the multifarious souls of the world are appearances of the one Absolute in different individual constitutions, even as the one Sun appears as if many when reflected in the waters contained in many vessels. Matter, in the Vedanta, does not leap from one form to another form but gets more and more transparent and extended in the higher evolution on account of its allowing thereby the manifestation of the consciousness of the Absolute in ever-widening and intensified degrees.

When Aristotle says that every form has its purpose in the realisation of the highest form of its species and that such species are unchangeable, he makes one feel that there are different forms for different species, another confusion caused by the notion of the plurality of forms, which, if they are really plural, would stultify the very meaning of God as the Supreme Form, for reasons already mentioned. The species also should, in the end, be stages in the development of the Form of God, if God is to be accepted at all as the ultimate Form. In the Vedanta, we do not find the attribution of different forms to species, for species too are just rungs in the unfoldment of consciousness in the process of the realisation of the Absolute. No independent reality can be given to the different species or genera. Nothing diversified or discrete in nature can enjoy true independence or freedom. All are stages in Self-realisation.

Aristotle thinks that a human soul cannot inhabit an animal body. There is only ascendance in organic life to higher forms. There seem to be several souls beginning from the lowest undeveloped organism to the fully developed human being. According to the Vedanta, there is a possibility of the human soul's reverting to a lower order of life due to the perpetration of an evil action, though, when the result of

this action is fully experienced in this lower life, the human soul rises once again to its original condition even if it has to pass through several orders of the lower species due to its binding actions. The human soul can lie latent even in inorganic matter; it all depends upon the kind of action one does. Retributive justice compels the human being to experience the fruits of his actions whether it be in a super-human state or a sub-human one. It is the materialisation of the force of action that the soul is compelled to experience and this necessity has no concern whatsoever with the state or the species in which this experience may have to be undergone by the human soul.

There is a complaint from many a man in the street today that the seeking for personal salvation is selfish, that individual salvation is not the goal aimed at by the really great compassionate men. Aristotle makes it clear that personal or individual immortality is inconceivable. The essential or the creative reason in man is universal; it is the divine being that manifests itself in man as the higher creative reason, and not a personal faculty confined to any particular individuality. This essential reason may be identified with the Supreme Being, God. Hence the attainment of the immortal is one's being universal and not gaining a personal or selfish end. To Aristotle Self-realisation is the fulfilment of the universal purpose, the realisation of the true good of all beings. Aristotle insists that it is the foremost duty of every rational human being to stick to the immortal at any cost, that the philosophical pursuit is an imperative, and that the highest activity of man consists in the contemplation of the Real. We have in Plato and Aristotle the perfect specimen of a true philosopher. They are sometimes inclined, of course, to emphasise the social and political side of life as the end of human existence, which attitude has to be attributed to the condition of the times in which they lived, rather than to their fundamental inclinations or natural temperaments. They were philosophers of the society and the State, whose perfection

and strength were considered to be indispensable for the evolution of the individual towards the realisation of the Divine Being.

PLOTINUS

Plotinus, the celebrated mystic, comes nearest in his views to the Vedanta philosophy, and is practically in full agreement with the Eastern sages, both in his theory and his methodology. His system is called Neoplatonism, as it consummates the philosophy of Plato in a highly developed mysticism. To Plotinus, God or the Absolute is the All. The diversities of the world are grounded in the Absolute, though the Absolute is above all contradictions and differences. It is the first causeless Cause, and the world emanates from It as an overflow of its Perfection. We cannot define God, for definition is limitation to certain attributes. All logical, ethical and aesthetic principles, truth, goodness and beauty, are incapable of representing Him in His true greatness. Nothing can be said of the essential Reality of God, and what we can give at the most is a negative description of His Being. He is beyond being and non-being, beyond all concepts, notions and perceptions. He is above thinking, feeling and willing, above subject and object, above all conceivable principles and categories. He cannot even be called a Self-conscious Being, for this implies duality. He is the Thinker and the Thought, and also what is Thought. He is everything. He alone is.

This is nothing short of the Advaita Vedanta of Shankara. Only the view that the world is an overflow of the Perfection of God is peculiar to Plotinus. For, to the Vedanta, there is no such overflow; there is, to it, only the Absolute, and the world is its appearance; not an emanation from or an overflow of its being. This is the position, in spite of the acceptance of a relativistic creation of the Universe from the Absolute, as adumbrated in the Upanishads. For Plotinus the world is neither the creation of God nor an evolute from Him, but just an emanation. Plotinus, no doubt, takes care to see that this emanation does not in any way affect the Perfection of God. Plotinus is not advocating the *parinamavada* or the transformation theory of some of the Indian schools. God does not become the world by modification or

transformation of Himself. He is ever what He is and the emanation is something like that of light from the sun. God never gets lost or exhausted in the world. Plotinus is thus free from the charge of propounding a pantheism. God is both transcendent and immanent. The world originates, subsists and finally merges in God. The Thought of God and the Object of this Thought are one and the same, and the world is God's Thought. God's Thought is merely the activity of His own being; it is the immediate, instantaneous, all-comprehending Essence of pure Consciousness, direct and intuitive, knowing everything at one stroke, and transcending the dualistic categories of relative reason, which functions through a succession of ideas.

Plotinus introduces into his system the Ideas of Plato, which are the archetypes of all things in the universe, and which are thoughts in the Mind of God. Only Plotinus would rise above Plato in not making God's Thought dependent on the ideas. For God is absolutely independent. Rather Plotinus makes the Platonic Ideas what the ideative processes are in the Ishvara of the Vedanta. The whole world is for Plotinus what the Vedanta means by Ishvara-*srishti*, or cosmic manifestation, as distinguished from *jiva-srishti* or individual imagination.

God's Universal Thought, which we may compare to the Creative Will of Ishvara, manifests the World-Soul in the second stage of emanation. This World-Soul has some of the characteristics of Hiranyagarbha, and while it is rooted in the pure Divine Thought, and possesses its characteristics, it has a tendency towards bringing order in the sense-world. When it acts in the sense-world, it becomes the Soul of the physical world. The World-Soul has an eternal aspect as rooted in pure Thought, and a relative aspect as animating the phenomena of Nature and subject to temporal division. The World-Soul produces matter and acts on it as its animating principle.

The theory is strikingly similar to the Vedanta, excepting, of course, the several technical concepts which are peculiar only to Greek thought. But matter for Plotinus is the principle of evil. In the Vedanta, however, matter is an appearance of God Himself, and it becomes evil only when it excites and feeds the passions of the individual. Else it is a phase of the body of Ishvara, worthy of adoration. Evil is not a cosmic principle for the Vedanta; evil exists only for the individuals, and it is to be attributed to their ignorance of the true nature of things.

Plotinus also refers to the Vedanta conception of *jiva-srishti,* when he says that the souls contained in the World-Soul, as its ideas, act on matter and give it a sensuous character. Plotinus, however, is not very clear in his assigning to these souls the function of creating matter and of acting on matter. When he says that they are beyond space and produce matter we have to take them as ideas in the World-Soul, which manifest the physical universe and which are all held together in the unified intelligence of the World-Soul. When they are said to give matter a sensuous image, they may be considered to have undergone division as individuals which act on the objects of the world in sense-perception. For, creating matter and making it a sense-object cannot be the function of the soul in one and the same condition of its consciousness; the one is trans-empirical, and the other empirical. The former may create division through space, time and objectivity, but does not necessarily render them sensuous. Plotinus regards the appearances of the World-Soul, matter and its division into sense-objects as simultaneous processes, distinguishable only in imagination or thought. Here, again, he concurs with the cosmology of the Vedanta.

The system of Plotinus rises to lofty heights and takes creation beyond time, with no beginning and not originating in any fiat of the Divine Will. Plotinus has in him, however, aspects of the *Samkhya* when he says that the world is

eternal in spite of its outward changes. He has also elements of the *bhedabheda* doctrine of difference-in-non-difference, and he is not always a consistent non-dualist. These have, however, to be regarded as mere concessions to occasional descents in the philosopher's thought, or as indications of an attempt to present to the world different aspects of the one Reality.

The essential nature of the soul, Plotinus holds, is freedom and eternal existence. It is a part of the World-Soul, and, as in the Vedanta the bondage of the soul is simultaneous with the creation of the diversity of the world by Ishvara and is actually occasioned by the Jiva itself by its passions, so in Plotinus the individual soul gets bound by its sensuality, consequent upon the manifestation of matter by the World-Soul. The blessedness of the soul is in its turning towards God, in its contemplation of the Real, by freeing itself from sensuality. The Goal of life is the realisation of God or the Absolute-Intelligence. This is possible through a tremendous discipline of the soul, by abandoning attachments to the body and bodily connections, and by contemplating on the Eternal. The soul, in the beatific vision obtained in ecstasy, attains communion with the Real. Ecstasy is beyond contemplation and is akin to the *samadhi* of the Yoga and the Vedanta. Plotinus is one of the very few mystics with whom the Vedanta would have the greatest sympathy; in both we find the transfiguring element of unconditioned devotion to the Absolute. Plotinus was a great sage and is said to have been blessed with the beatific vision of the Absolute several times in his life. It is the opinion of some scholars that the strikingly Oriental element in Plotinus is due to his having gained the wisdom of India while he was accompanying the Emperor Gordian in his campaign in the East.

The flashes of insight in Plotinus are superb: "There everything is transparent, nothing dark, nothing resistant; every being is lucid to every other, in breadth and depth;

light runs through light. And each of them contains all within itself, and at the same time sees all in every other, so that everywhere there is all, all is all, and each all, and infinite the glory. Each of them is great; the small is great: the sun, there, is all the stars, and every star again is all the stars and sun. While some one manner of being is dominant in each, all are mirrored in every other." "In this Intelligible World, every thing is transparent. No shadow limits vision. All the essences see each other and interpenetrate each other in the most intimate depth of their nature. Light everywhere meets light. Every being contains within itself the entire Intelligible World, and also beholds it entire in every particular being... There abides pure movement; for He who produces movement, not being foreign to it, does not disturb it in its production. Rest is perfect, because it is not mingled with any principle of disturbance. The Beautiful is completely beautiful there, because it does not dwell in that which is not beautiful." "To have seen that vision is reason no longer. It is more than reason, before reason, and after reason, as also is the vision which is seen. And perhaps we should not here speak of sight; for that which is seen if we must needs speak of seer and seen as two and not one is not discerned by the seer, nor perceived by him as a second thing. Therefore this vision is hard to tell of; for how can a man describe as other than himself that which, when he discerned it, seemed not other, but one with himself indeed?" (*Enneads*, V. 8; VI. 9, 10).

Who can afford to miss noticing the similarity, nay, identity of these passages with the magnificent proclamations of Sage Yajnavalkya as recorded in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (Ch. III, IV)?

RENE DESCARTES

Rene Descartes is rightly called the father of modern philosophy. In him the modern tendency to free philosophy from the aesthetic interests of the ancient Greeks and the theological bent of the medieval scholastics, and to rest it mainly on scientific and rational foundations, took its origin. Descartes recognised that the principles of philosophy should be based on self-evident truths, which are certain for all time and free from doubt and dispute, even as the axioms of mathematics are, from which we can correctly deduce all other truths in a logical order, provided we do not go wrong in our calculation and reasoning. His problem was to find out such a self-evident principle on which to base all further discovery and research.

Descartes began with doubt. He found that we cannot trust sense-experience, for it often deceives us and it is hard to assure ourselves of the reality of things which appear to correspond to our sensations. We cannot even be sure of the reality of our own bodies; perhaps we are dreaming that we have bodies; perhaps we are dreaming that we are seeing objects outside. How can we know whether we are waking or dreaming? We may be entirely mistaken in believing what we see. Perhaps the world is only in the mind, in imagination. It may be just an illusion produced by thought. Everything may be doubtful, even mathematical truths. The only certainty seems to be that there is nothing certain!

Now comes the stroke of genius in Descartes. He discovered that though all things may be doubtful, the fact that we doubt is itself not doubtful. The basis of doubt cannot be doubted. There is doubt, thinking; this is certain. And so the existence of the doubter or the thinker, too, must be certain. '*Cogito, ergo sum*' concluded Descartes. "I think, therefore, I am." From the fact of thinking it is to be concluded that the thinker is a spiritual being; I am, and I must be essentially spiritual in nature. This knowledge is the only certain one, and it does not come from sense-perception or imagination. Here is the self-evident rational basis for all

deduction in philosophy. This is a universal and necessary proposition.

In the Vedanta we have a reversal of this process of deduction followed by Descartes. The former deduces the thought from the thinker and not the thinker from the thought. Instead of saying "I think, therefore I am", it would say "I am, therefore I think." The Self, to the Vedanta, is prior to the act of thinking. What is indubitable and self-evident is not the fact that we think, but that we are. The awareness of the existence of one's own self is not deduced from thinking or doubting. It is the only self-evident truth beyond all proofs, it being the source of all proofs. As the famous dictum of Shankara goes, "no one doubts his own Self", and this is not the result of a chain of reasoning or a deduction from a process of empirical functioning of thought. In short, to the Vedanta, the highest Consciousness is of the Self, and this Consciousness is identical with Existence. We cannot make a distinction between '*sat*' and *'chit',* Existence and its Consciousness. The experience of the world through the senses and the mind, the various processes of thinking and the different implications of this experience are all offshoots of the consciousness of the Self. Thought does not precede the thinker; the thinker precedes the thought and the consciousness of the thinker precedes the fact of his being a thinker.

Descartes makes his '*Cogito ergo sum'* the starting point of his proof for the existence of God. 'I think, therefore, I am' is an undisputed truth. Thought must exist, for the thinker exists. Well; now, take the thought or the idea of God which arises in the mind. Naturally, as every effect has a cause, the idea of God must have a cause, a basis. It is also known that the cause cannot be less than the effect; if there is any value or reality in the effect, it must be present in the cause, also. For, nothing can come from nothing; this, too, is a self-evident truth. The effect cannot have, therefore, a greater reality than the cause. So the idea of God, which is of an

infinite Being, cannot arise from me, a finite being. This idea of the infinite must therefore be due to the existence of an infinite cause thereof, which must have placed this idea in me. This infinite existence which is responsible for the rise of the idea of the infinite in me is God. Thus, the existence of God is proved.

Descartes could have as well argued this out better in the following manner: The idea of the infinite is in my mind; it has arisen from my mind. But I am a finite being; how, then, has this happened that a greater effect has arisen from a smaller cause? This cannot be, for the cause is always at least as great as the effect. But it is also true that the idea of the infinite has arisen in my mind, it does not come from some other's mind. And my idea is real, it exists, for I, who am its cause, exist as a reality—my existence cannot be doubted, '*Cogito ergo sum*'. Hence, if my idea of the infinite exists, and if it must have a cause, and if I am its cause, and also if the cause is not less than its effect, I must be an infinite being. Infinite Being must be God, for there cannot be two infinite beings. Thus, the proof for the existence of God would, at the same time, be proof of my identity with God. This reasoning, had he but followed it, would have taken Descartes nearer to the truth of the Advaita Vedanta, that the individual soul is essentially one with the Absolute. But this Descartes did not do; he left his self in its finite individual state. This self of Descartes, therefore, is different from the Atman of the Vedanta.

The argument is also justified by its moral aspect, which makes the infinite the goal of the moral urge within us, which ever makes us strive to reach it, to become perfect, and to discover the implication of its existence in the very feeling and acceptance of our being finite and imperfect. Descartes resorts to this aspect of the argument and says that a reference to the infinite and perfect being is necessarily included in the recognition of one's finitude and imperfection. I know that I am finite; therefore the infinite

exists. The knowledge of limits points to what is beyond limits.

This conclusion of Descartes is quite acceptable to the Vedanta, for whom Mumukshutva, or the longing for liberation from finitude, which arises in the self, can have meaning only when the Infinite exists. But to it, the proof for the existence of the Infinite consists not in mere logical deduction, but in an inner persuasion and conviction independent of reasoning, an essentially moral urge, though the aspirant may later on, for his satisfaction and strength, seek to justify the validity of this inner call by resort to reasoning. What the Vedanta calls *viveka*, or the discrimination between the real and the unreal, which is the fundamental requisite of a spiritual aspirant, is a rational conviction of a higher order, in which the moral urge directing the aspirant to the Eternal is necessarily implied as an invariable concomitant.

Descartes comes to the conclusion, from the nature of the perfection that God is, that God is the ultimate causeless cause, by an argument akin to that of Aristotle. Only the admission of such a God can avoid an infinite regress in our search for an ultimate cause. Descartes holds that the innate idea of God that rises in the mind is sufficient proof of God's having made man in His own image. God's existence is the precondition of the existence of all other things, including the individual souls, and also of His idea in the human mind. There cannot be an idea of God without the existence of God. God is incorporeal, intelligence, all-knowing, good and just. He is omnipotent, eternal. He has no changes, no modes of attribute, no modifications. As a deeply religious man, Descartes regards reason as valid only when it does not conflict with authority. This is the position of the Vedanta, too, for which unaided reason is more a hindrance to success in spiritual pursuits than a safe guide. The value of reason rests on its conforming to *sruti*, or intuitional revelation.

The existence of physical things which are extended in space outside, Descartes proves by appeal to our sensations which, according to him, ought to be caused by the presence of these things. Things or bodies are substances, and their existence is extra-mental, they are not dependent on our thoughts. Thus, Descartes posits three existences or substances: God, mind and physical things or bodies. The mind and the physical bodies are different from each other, known only through their functions and properties; but both these are dependent on the supreme substance, God. Bodies are moved by God, for they have no capacity for independent motion; they are passive, inert. And their motion obeys the laws of mechanics. But Descartes does not think that God can interfere with the mechanistic scheme of the world. God, when He created the world, endowed it with a certain amount of motion and rest, and He confines Himself to the operation of matter within the limit prescribed by Himself originally. There cannot be increase in the amount of motion, though God could have made the world otherwise, if He liked, at the time of creation. Motion and rest, which are properties of matter, do not increase or decrease.

Mind, according to Descartes, is without the extension characteristic of bodies. It is absolutely different from bodies. The mind and the bodies are not dependent on each other, though both are dependent on God. There is a dualism between the mind and the bodies, and the latter are determined by the laws of mechanics. The mind is not a part of the physical world which consists of extended bodies. Descartes has no teleology about matter and its laws. No purpose or final cause determines the ways of the world. The mechanism of physical science reigns supreme in the world of matter. Even the human body, though organic in nature, is mechanical in its functions, and is moved by the heat generated in the heart. The body works not purposively but automatically like a machine.

The most curious part of the philosophy of Descartes is his view that the mind and the body do not interact in order to produce changes, and that their apparently mutual interaction is really the agreement between their functions due to their running parallel to each other like two well-adjusted clocks which show the same time, though they do not influence each other in any way. Descartes is not inclined to admit any dependence of body on mind or vice versa. The parallelism in the workings of the mind and body is attributed to the will of God, Who has made them in that way.

There is a radical difference between Descartes and the Vedanta in regard to the relations subsisting among God, world and soul. Descartes confuses between the mind and the soul and he seems to think that the mind is the soul or the inner self of a person. To the Vedanta, the soul is consciousness. The Supreme Soul, or God, is the absolute consciousness existing as the background of the activities of the mind. The individual soul, however, is the very same consciousness manifest through the medium of the mind and thus partaking of the temporal and fluctuating characteristics of the mind. The mind as such is inert, has no consciousness in it; it is merely a vehicle of individuality, and its consciousness is borrowed from the supreme Soul. The mind, therefore, cannot be the soul.

God is not cut off from the world and the souls; it is God that appears as the world and the souls. If God, as Descartes thinks, is different from the world and the souls, there can be no relation between Him and these, so that He cannot even set them to work parallelly and independently. By holding that God is other than the mind, Descartes would be stultifying his own position that God has impressed His idea on the mind of man. Consequently it would also follow from the dualism between God and man that man cannot have knowledge of God, cannot have even any kind of relations with Him. Sometimes Descartes finds himself forced to establish a causal relation between God and the world of

individuals, in order to answer to the objection that no interaction would be possible between them if strict dualism or pluralism of substances is admitted. Descartes does not remove the discrepancy given rise to by his contradictory views that God is the only real substance and also that God, world and mind are three real substances. He creates great gulfs without trying to bridge them.

The theory of parallelism propounded by Descartes is opposed to facts of experience. The feelings and passions experienced by individuals prove the interaction between the mind and the body. The complex emotions that arise in the mind and the different sensations of hunger, pain, colour, sound, etc., cannot be exclusively the functions of the mind alone or the body alone; these are results of a mutual interaction between the mind and the body. According to the Vedanta, man is neither pure Spirit alone, nor pure mind alone, nor pure body alone. Man is a blend, together, of spirit, mind and body. The spiritual Self, the mind and the senses together constitute an individual. We are an organic whole, not merely divided parts, as Descartes thinks. The highest organism, however, is Ishvara, in Whom the world and the individuals are merged to form a wholeness of being. Ishvara's will is the supreme mover, director and organiser of all things. To the Vedanta, the world and the individuals are not realities independent of Ishvara, but appearances of Ishvara Himself. Ishvara is the only reality, Brahman viewed from the empirical standpoint. The individual, that is man, is a part of Ishvara, Who is the Inner Controller of all beings, and in essence man is inseparable from Ishvara. This identity is realised when the independent and distorted functioning of the will of man ceases and he allows his higher intelligence to rise to the infinite that is Ishvara. Ishvara's relation to the world and the individuals is something like the relation that the waking individual has to the dream world and to the individuals seen in dream. The differences among God, world and the individuals are therefore mere makeshifts of the empirical consciousness, while in truth there is only one

Being which is called God in relation to the empirical world and the individuals, and the Absolute, in itself. The trinity of substances in Descartes militates against reason and fails to accord with experience.

Descartes raises a point which is not in disagreement with the Vedanta when he says that God does not interfere with the workings of the world which He Himself has determined when creating the world. In the Vedanta, Ishvara does not so much create the world as make possible the manifestation of the unmanifested potencies of the unliberated individuals which lay dormant at the time of the dissolution of the world during the previous cycle. All that happens in this world is in perfect accordance with the will of Ishvara and hence the view that He does not change the present scheme of the world into something else is no denying of His omnipotence. He is all-powerful. He can make the world other than what it is; only there is no need for His doing so. There is no reason why He should interfere with the movements of the world when he Himself has willed them to be such.

But the explanation of the world by the laws of mechanics offered by Descartes is in no way tenable according to the Vedanta. The world appears to work in strict obedience to the laws of mechanics, because our ways of looking at it are limited to the operation of the space-time phenomenon, which makes us feel that causation is a straight-line process of the temporal precedence of the cause in the production of effects. But the truth is otherwise. The world of matter is not segregated from man or God. An organic unity cannot be explained by mechanical laws even as the functions of the human body cannot be subjected entirely to the mathematical laws of physics. A higher vision and understanding disclose the fact that there is a supreme end towards which the apparently mechanical operations of matter tend, that the movements of the world are purposive, and that the fulfilment of the phenomena of the world and

the individuals is in the final realisation of the Absolute. Mechanics is what is seen from a surface-view; as its implication hidden behind sense-perception is the great truth that all change and motion is a yearning to unfold within oneself the reality that is immutable.

BENEDICT SPINOZA

Spinoza is undoubtedly one of the greatest rationalist philosophers of the West. He developed the Cartesian theory of Substance into a full-fledged system of symmetry and perfection. To Spinoza there is only one Substance, God, and this he accepted in agreement with one of the aspects of the philosophy of Descartes. All things in the world follow for Spinoza from the supreme Substance, not as evolutes of it in the process of time, but in the manner of corollaries of a geometrical theorem. The universe is necessarily deduced from the one Substance as we deduce mathematical truths in our calculations and reasonings. Space, time and objects are all modes of the one Substance. Spinoza does not give time a separate reality; to him there is only eternity and time is only a mode of thought. Anticipating Hegel, as it were, he argues that the conclusions arrived at logically are not different from what exist really. He would agree with Hegel that logic and metaphysics are essentially one. To Spinoza thought and reality lose their distinctness and become one. Spinoza conceives the universe as an interrelated system in which every element is accommodated as an indispensable and necessary feature in the exact place assigned to it. The universe is a strictly determined whole and becomes rigid with the absence of any purpose or final aim directing it beyond itself. Spinoza makes thought and extension, the properties of the mind and matter in the philosophy of Descartes, the two attributes of the absolute Substance, and thus a greater consistency and method is seen in the system of Spinoza than in that of Descartes.

Substance is God, and, being independent, it is also infinite. All finite things are dependent on some other things. The Substance is its own determination, nothing else can determine it; it is not dependent on anything else. The great motto of Spinoza is that all determination is negation, and so the Substance is free from the determination of individuality or discreteness. God, being infinite, cannot be possessed of the psychological organs or be endowed with the volitional

and intellectual functions known to man, which are valid only on a dualistic basis. Spinoza differs from Descartes in his view that God and the world are not two distinct principles. He merges God in the world and the world in God. Thus we get a pantheism where God is the world and the world is God. Students of Spinoza have, however, endeavoured to discover a transcendent aspect of the Supreme Substance and save him from the charge of pantheism.

Thought and extension are considered by Spinoza to be the two outstanding attributes of the supreme Substance, God. God has infinite attributes, but out of these only thought and extension are intelligible to man. These two attributes are everywhere, for they are inherent in the Substance which is infinite. There is no part of the Substance which is not defined by thought and extension. Spinoza is inclined to make each of these attributes infinite in nature, though on account of his endowing God with infinite attributes he is hesitant to make them absolutely infinite. The theory of parallelism which Descartes propounded finds a place again in Spinoza's system, though in a modified way. Spinoza holds that thought and extension cannot have interaction between themselves, for they are the inward and outward expression of one and the same process. One and the same entity appears as mind within and matter without. The order and connection of mental phenomena is not dissimilar to that of physical phenomena. The two laws run parallel to each other in their method and working. Mind and body are consequently considered to be modes of one process, having one law, and, thus, they cannot exercise influence on each other in any way. Thought and extension have equal reality and are subsistent in the infinite Substance and proceed from it as necessarily as mathematical deductions. There is no substance independent of God, Who is the supreme Substance and Whose attributes are thought and extension. In short, God, to Spinoza, is a thinking and extended being, which would mean that God is possessed of mind and body, though by God's mind and body Spinoza does not mean the

mind and the body with which we are familiar, but the mental processes scattered over all space and time and the physical processes that constitute the stuff of the world. While Spinoza dismisses the dualism of substances admitted by Descartes, he accepts the same by making them attributes of the supreme Substance. The same difficulty remains, though the terminology in which it is expressed is different, and the rigour of the dualism is attempted to be overcome by its association with the One Substance.

Spinoza holds that Nature is in reality the one universal Substance, and its appearance as consisting of diversified phenomena is the result of our imperfect ways of looking at it. Everything in the world is an attribute or a mode of the eternal Substance, and its existence is the reality of all things. Spinoza goes beyond Descartes when he thinks that God and mind, too, are determined by the laws of mechanics. Spinoza makes strict determinism prevail in Nature. Purpose and design are to him delusions transferred to the objective universe by the limited vision of individuals. The will of God and the laws of Nature are not two different things, but mean the same thing. The laws are unchangeable and mechanical. There is a distinction, however, made by Spinoza between his conception of the supreme Substance and the ordinary view of substantiality or concreteness which many are likely to hold in regard to substance. By Substance Spinoza means essence or ultimate existence and not corporeal matter. He identifies his Substance, or God, which is the cause or origin, with what he terms *Natura Naturans*, as distinguished from the visible physical universe of diversified bodies, which is merely an effect and which he calls *Natura Naturata*. Spinoza's God has no will or intellect of the ordinary kind. He identifies God's Will with the totality of all causes and laws and God's Intellect with the totality of all minds in the universe. Thus, it appears that his God is in all ways the sum-total of individualities.

In the philosophy of the Vedanta, time is not a mode of any individual's mind but is necessarily valid to all minds. It is a part of Ishvara-*srishti* and it can be called a mode of thought only when this thought is identified with the cosmic Will of Ishvara. All individuals are in time and no one creates time. Space and time are the necessary presuppositions of all perceptions. Even the ideas that arise in the mind of man are determined by the properties of space and time. Sensation, thinking, understanding and reasoning are all dependent on the universal properties of space and time. It is true that there is only eternity, and time is a relative appearance, but it has to be added here that this appearance is not the product of any individual's thought, but is the determining factor of all individual thoughts. Time belongs to the cosmos and hence it is an extramental reality. The Vedanta would agree with Spinoza that time is a mode of thought only when this thought is identified with God's Thought.

Spinoza's view that the universe is determined and rigid without any purpose or design directing it is not fully acceptable. The Vedanta makes a distinction between the universe as such which it calls Ishvara-*srishti*, and the universe in relation to the individual which guides the processes of a secondary universe, which it calls *jiva-srishti*. When it takes into consideration the universe as such, the Vedanta would agree with Spinoza that it is determined and has no purpose beyond itself. For, the universe as it is in itself, independent of individual perceivers, is the body of Ishvara, and it is its own end. It has no other aim which may determine or direct its processes. God's Will is an eternal law, without a beginning and an end, and, as the universe as such is the very body of Ishvara, it must be eternally determined in its workings, allowing in no change, modification or amendment of any kind. Cosmic determination, relentless and immutable, is the law of the universe of Ishvara. But in the relative universe, which is what is observed by the individuals, there is purpose, design, aim, an ultimate goal. We cannot deny the fact of change in

this universe. Change is movement and movement cannot be merely a chaotic changing of positions without a directing principle behind it. All change is movement towards an aim, a fulfilment in a higher principle, which is more inclusive and which transcends all the lower ones. The realisation of the highest perfection in the consciousness of what does not admit of any further transcendence is the ultimate directing principle of all movements seen in the world and the individuals. In other words, God-realisation or Self-realisation is the goal of life. Thus, there is a purpose in the workings of Nature, of which the different individuals are parts and which constitutes their environment with which they are inextricably bound.

Spinoza's view that God is a thinking and extended being requires a higher clarification and amendation according to the Vedanta. To say that God is thinking and is extended would be to make God a spatial entity. If God is in space, He is temporal and finite, and if He is not in space, He cannot be extended or have the need to think of anything. Thinking is always *of* something, and thinking in God can be accepted only when it is raised to the status of the activity of pure Consciousness in its own being and not considered as a faculty of mentation which requires an object outside it. God has to be really beyond space and time, for He is infinite. In the philosophy of the Vedanta, God and the Absolute have to be theoretically distinguished from each other. God is Ishvara, and the Absolute is Brahman. Ishvara, however, in His aspects of the Consciousness underlying the causal, the subtle and the gross universes is said to be defined by the characteristics of the universe. Thought and extension are not attributed even to Ishvara in the ordinary sense of these terms. No doubt, we speak of the Cosmic Idea or Will arising in Ishvara, but it is not an idea of any external object, not a will that determines anything outside itself. Ishvara is above space and time, for He is prior to the creation of the visible universe. Extension is divisibility and divisibility admits of change. Not only this; extension is an object of sense-

perception. But Ishvara, or God, is not an object of the senses. When we attribute the characteristics of the temporal universe to Ishvara, we do not make Him an object of the senses, for He is infinite in nature. There is a great difference between the conception of Ishvara in the Vedanta and that of God in the system of Spinoza. Ishvara in the Vedanta is merely the objective counterpart of the individual's perceptions and experiences, logically deducted and accepted on the ground of the necessity of positing Brahman, or the Absolute, on the one side, and of taking for granted the visible universe of physical bodies on the other. The nature of Ishvara, therefore, is determined by the logical necessities arising from individual experience in the relative universe. What is experienced in individual perception is not necessarily a part of the Cosmic Reality, but the need for a satisfactory explanation of the implications of individual experience necessitates a transference of the contents of individual experience to the constitution of the Cosmic Reality. This transference, of course, is purely the result of individual necessity. Thought and extension are not considered to be essential aspects of Ishvara, but they are posited as necessary characteristics of His constitution merely to offer an explanation of the implications of human experience. It does not, however, mean that there is an 'objective' Ishvara absolutely independent of Brahman, mediating between the *Jiva*, or the individual, and Brahman, the Absolute. Else, the immediate salvation of the individual on the rise of perfect knowledge would be impossible and it would become necessary for every individual to get lodged in the state of Ishvara. Ishvara is Brahman itself visualised from the point of view of individual experiences. If there are no individuals, there cannot be an Ishvara, too; there would be only Brahman. But Spinoza's God has thought and extension as His necessary attributes. This God, thus, would be subject to spatial divisibility and become finite.

Spinoza merges God in the world and does not allow of a transcendent aspect of God. If the universe and God are one,

the changes characteristic of the universe would be present in God, too. When God is subject to change and modification, He becomes finite, again. The Vedanta preserves the transcendent aspect of God, which remains unaffected by the changes that occur in the universe. Moreover, the universal changes are only apparent from the point of view of Reality, so that there is no possibility of God's being affected by the changes in the world. For the Vedanta, God is not exhausted in the world. His eternal aspect shines beyond the dust of the earth.

Spinoza identifies the Will of God with the totality of causes and laws and the intellect of God with the totality of minds in the universe. If God were but a sum total of all individual constitutions, the errors and defects present in them would also be present in God. The universe is characterised by ignorance, error, change, modification and death. The causes and laws in the universe are seen to be relative and not absolute. The minds of individuals are possessed of limited knowledge, and that too, of external things alone, and not of the essential reality of things. An accumulation of many finites cannot give us the Infinite. God is not merely an aggregate of the imperfect individuals and their laws. God is superior to the individuals, not only in quantity but also in quality. God, in the Vedanta, is not a sum total of individual beings, but the original or prototype consciousness, of which the individuals are limited and distorted reflections. As the defects of the reflections do not affect their original, so the defects of the individuals do not affect God—so holds the Vedanta. The individuals have a twofold defect: they are limited—this is quantitative deficiency; they are also distorted reflections—this is qualitative deficiency.

Spinoza denies free-will and establishes strict determinism. Human willing is determined by another cause, that by another cause, and thus *ad infinitum.* Man has the wrong notion that he is free, because he is unable to know

the causes that direct his will. It is this ignorance on his part that is the cause of his being affected by censure, praise, pain, pleasure, etc. Spinoza compares the free-will that man seems to have to the thinking of a stone, if it were endowed with thought, that the positions which it occupies when it is thrown into space are chosen by its own free-will. In the philosophy of the Vedanta we have a blending together and a reconciliation of determinism and free-will. According to it, the universe as the manifestation of Ishvara is eternally determined by the Will of Ishvara. The past, present and future are all eternally fixed by His Cosmic Will. No individual, by any stretch of effort, can bring about the least change in this eternally determined universe of Ishvara's Will. But there is free-will. Free-will is the consciousness of independent individual agency which is given rise to by the Will of Ishvara when it manifests itself and works through the egoism of the individual. As long as this appearance of free-will is the sole director of the life of the individual, so long will the latter be responsible for its actions. The moment universal knowledge dawns in the individual, it rises above its notion of independent free-will and gets identified with the Will of Ishvara. In this universal identification consists the real freedom of the individual. The greater the approximation of the knowledge of the individual to the universal knowledge of the fact of the absolute supremacy of the Will of Ishvara, the greater is the freedom that the individual enjoys.

Spinoza's determinism has, of course, its higher ennobling side which attempts to free man from his petty individualism and unrestricted passions, and to make him understand that all events in the universe are parts of a perfection that is the whole. Spinoza feels that we would have no occasion to find fault with one another, to get angry or discontented, if only we could enter into the knowledge of the self-determined perfection of Nature and God. Guilt and error are results of ignorance of the universal perfection that reigns over the scheme of things, and Spinoza advises that

though we punish evil-doers, we ought to have no hatred towards them, for they perpetrate evil on account of lack of real knowledge. We may add here that the punishment usually inflicted on evil-doers is more a measure against elements disturbing social peace than a process of educating the evil-doers, though there is no denying that many a time fear of punishment becomes an important factor in one's practice of virtue and goodness.

The great good that Spinoza tries to do by his theory of determinism is to enable man to bear the brunt of all pains and misfortunes with serenity, peace and an inner strength, and to be free from the emotions of joy when something desired takes place; for Nature is no respecter of persons or things; it is strictly impartial, and its love consists in law. God is both a kind mother and a stern father. This higher determinism is to be seen brilliantly expounded in the Vedanta, too. With such knowledge one becomes fit for the contemplation of the essence of things, which Spinoza calls the 'Intellectual Love of God'. It is intellectual love, rational love, love based on understanding, and not the emotional love which surges as a result of instinctive pressures. This divine contemplation requires as its pre-condition a knowledge of the greatness of God and the perfection of His Nature, which is manifest as the laws of the universe. 'All for the best'—this spirit should animate a person after he does intelligently all that he is capable of doing in the right direction, within the limits of his discriminative reason. Determinism, however, is not a licence for idleness or fatalistic surrender; on the other hand, it is the understanding of the great law that God alone is real and that He alone is capable of doing anything at all. Determinism is the higher phase of things, while an amount of free-will which makes itself apparent in man's life, though it may ultimately be discovered to be a chimera, rules the ways of man, and is indispensable for a well-governed and sensible life. Here we have to bring about a reconciliation between determinism and free-will. Spinoza's determinism which

pays no heed to the fact of free-will and which makes the human soul a mode of God's Thought has, however, the sublime intention of raising man to God and divesting him of the wrong notion regarding his own importance in the world. The decision of the will and the determination of Nature coincide in the philosophy of Spinoza, for whom nothing higher than God or even equal to God can ever be. God cannot be loved unless His supremacy is known and accepted. If man, too, has some freedom on his part, then the state of God is not one of absolute freedom. Spinoza's love for God was intense and he did not wish that there should be anything in the world that would diminish this love, even in the least. Man's independent existence is, to him, an illusion. The truth is the oneness of man and his mind with Nature. From the interrelated system of Nature we are made to understand that man's love for God and God's love for man are both the same as God's love for Himself, for man is a mode of God. The highest good and the highest virtue, Spinoza makes clear, consist in the knowledge of God, the supreme Substance. This knowledge is attained in intuition.

Like Aristotle, Spinoza identifies the highest good of the individual with the highest good of the universe. And this highest good is the intuitive knowledge of God. Individualism and altruism, here, coalesce; selfishness is rooted out, for the one good of all is the love of God and the knowledge of God. In all these, Spinoza and the Vedanta are one.

G. W. LEIBNIZ

Leibniz propounds a pluralistic metaphysical idealism by reducing the reality of the universe to centres of force, which are all ultimately spiritual in their nature. Every centre of force is a substance, an individual, and is different from other centres of force. Such centres of force, Leibniz calls monads. These forces are unextended, not subject to division in space. None, excepting, of course, God, can destroy these monads, and so they are considered to be immortal in essence. Though quantitatively, the monads are practically similar to one another, qualitatively they are different. As the monads are spiritual entities, their internal differences too are determined by a spiritual character. It is this difference among them that gives them their distinctive individuality. We are reminded here of the viseshas, or differentia, of the ultimate atoms in the Nyaya and Vaiseshika philosophies, the viseshas giving a distinctive individuality to the atoms. The monads of Leibniz are subject to the changes of perception and appetition, each monad striving to attain clearer and clearer perception, which process is an attempt of the monad to come to a consciousness of greater and greater perfection in itself. The manifoldness of the monads and the way in which they are arranged account for the diversities of the world. These monads are present everywhere in the universe—in man, animal, plant and even in inanimate matter. For Leibniz there is no dead matter or blind force. Matter is endowed with life through and through. As all monads are not of the same kind, they admit of a hierarchy of degrees among themselves. There is a rise in the consciousness of perfection from matter to man. In matter the monads are unconscious; in man they rise to reflective consciousness.

Every monad is like a mirror, which reflects in itself the entire universe. A universal situation can be seen represented in a monad. The degrees of clarity in which the monads reflect the universe in themselves differ according to the position which they occupy in the great hierarchy, which,

again, is determined by the degree of the clarity of their perception. Their positions are determined by the intensity and clearness of their consciousness. The higher ones are considered to be the images of God, and the lower ones mirrors of the universe. Though the monads have this capacity, they are by no means infinite, for outside them there are other monads. Leibniz tells us that the past, present and future of things can be seen in a single monad; the knowledge of the constitution of a monad would give us a knowledge of the whole universe. In the hierarchy of monads there are infinite degrees, from the lowest to the highest, a gradually ascending series of spiritual entities or forces with no jumps or leaps of any kind between one monad and another. God is the highest Monad. Leibniz proves the existence of God in five ways: by the ontological proof, the cosmological proof in terms of the law of sufficient reason, the teleological proof, proof by the law of pre-established harmony, and the epistemological proof which requires a background for the eternal necessary truths seen in the world.

Like the entelechies of Aristotle, the monads of Leibniz are directed by an inner necessity, and not by outward compulsion. It is to be remembered that these monads are windowless essences, not permitting in the entrance of anything from outside. One monad cannot influence the other. True knowledge is infinite, unfolded from within, not received from outside. The possibilities of a monad are hidden in it, as a tree is latent in a seed. Evolution is the process of the realisation of the inner potentialities of the monads. The higher stages of evolution include and transcend the lower ones. The whole life of a monad is therefore a long chain with many links of the stages of self-transcendence. The past is over-stepped in the present and the present transcended in the future. We have again the reminiscences of Aristotle in the view of Leibniz that the succeeding stages in the evolution of a monad are the results or effects of its preceding stages, so that no action from

above or outside is necessary for its evolution. Though one monad is different from the other, each monad bears a harmonious relation to all the other monads. We may notice here the germs of the philosophy of organism brilliantly expounded later by Whitehead. Leibniz tries to bring about a reconciliation between mechanism and teleology by holding that insofar as the physical realm is governed by strict law and order, it can be explained mechanically, but that the scheme of the universe is directed by a final aim towards which it evolves. Mechanics, for Leibniz, is rooted in metaphysics; the mathematical and mechanical laws of the physical realm point to God as their ultimate goal. Science and religion are thus brought together. We get an organic whole of a universe where every fact or event had a reason why it exists or happens in such and such a manner, in such a place and at such a time. Not only should every judgment have a reason to prove it, but every object a reason to be. This is the law of sufficient reason advocated by Leibniz, which is at once logical as well as metaphysical. This law leads to a kind of determinism rather than to give room to free-will, for the causes of an event or a fact are determined already by the circumstances in which a monad is placed in the hierarchy, and even an apparent free choice would only be the result of the joint action of the various conditions, the contingent past and present factors, which make the monad what it is. But Leibniz allows some free-will without properly explaining how this is to be reconciled with the absolute supremacy and omnipotence of God. The law of sufficient reason requires the universe to be a rational whole, where logical and metaphysical truths become identical.

The individual souls which form a divine hierarchy of monads have much in common with God who is their prototype. The reason in man is essentially one with God's consciousness, but it differs from the latter in the degree of its intensity. The kingdom of God has therefore two aspects: the hierarchy of monads and the physical universe. All these work together parallelly by pre-established harmony. The

same old parallelism in the workings of the mind and the body persists with a different note in the philosophy of Leibniz. God, according to Leibniz, has arranged the mind and the body in such a way that the two work in harmony with each other. God has endowed all monads with identical contents. The theory of windowless monads prevents any interaction among them. The harmony of functions between the psychic and the physical states is pre-established by God, in the beginning. Though the monads have different kinds of perception, there is a single current underlying them all. Minds and bodies form parts of the organism of the universe. Though the parts of the organism are connected by causal relations, it should not be forgotten that these relations are strictly preordained by God and are not to be understood in the sense of actual interaction.

There is a difference in the manner of action in souls and bodies. Souls are directed by a teleological law; bodies are determined by mechanical motion. But both work in unison by pre-established harmony. Leibniz also adds that the spiritual monads, when they are perceived by the senses, appear as the phenomenal universe; in other words, matter is spirit discerned by the senses.

God, Who is the highest Monad, is changeless and has no modification. He is the absolutely real being. But the great importance which Leibniz gives to logic and mathematics, considering them to be examples of eternal truths, makes him think that the laws of human thought are binding on God, also.

Leibniz holds that there are monads within monads. There are organisms living even in what is ordinarily supposed to be dead matter. Every particle of matter houses several living organisms. Every such organism, again, is an abode of several other organisms, and so on. His theory of the universal presence of living beings is called panpsychism.

The relation between God and the monads Leibniz speaks of in different ways. Sometimes he thinks that they

are eternal, sometimes that they are created by God, Who can even destroy them, if He wills, and sometimes that they are manifestations of God Himself. If they are eternal, they must be different from God and have nothing to do with God, in which case they cannot reach the perfection of God. Further, as they are limited entities, they cannot be eternal. If they are not eternal, they must be perishable and have no real worth in them. If their goal is God, God must be immanent in them; in other words, they must be God Himself appearing, and not entities created by God Who can even destroy them. The monads are either existent or non-existent. If they are existent, they are real, and so cannot be destroyed; if they are non-existent, there is nothing to be destroyed.

The plurality of monads in the system of Leibniz is a great hindrance to a satisfactory explanation of their relation to God. If they are really plural in their essence, they will become independent eternal entities, whose eternity would only be in name. For, there cannot be eternity of many things; individuality is subject to spatiality, and so to change. Leibniz is anxious to make the universe a harmonious whole, but this he does with a highly artificial scheme of pre-established harmony. This pre-establishment cannot be established without the doctrine of the plurality of monads, which, again, cannot be established without pre-established harmony. The reasoning becomes circular. That there is interaction between mind and body and between individuals cannot be doubted. Much later, Whitehead made it clear that every entity in the universe flows into every other and that there are no watertight compartments among things. Moreover, if the monads are different from one another, they would have to be contained in space, for we cannot have the notion of difference without the notion of space. But for Leibniz the monads are immaterial and unextended. If they are extended in space, they are material bodies; if they are unextended and spiritual, there cannot be a plurality of them. Only a universal, undivided wholeness, where plurality is

transcended, can justify the spirituality of the monads. Else, they would be reduced to physical atoms hanging in space.

In the philosophy of the Vedanta, the plurality of ultimate substances has no place. It admits that there is a plurality of *Jivas*, or individual souls, but these are not the ultimate essences of existence. The essence of the *Jiva* is the Atman, which is pure consciousness in nature. There is no plurality of Atmans; the Atman is one in reality and it is identical with God, or the Absolute. We notice a confusion in Leibniz between minds and souls. The Vedanta makes a distinction between the mind and the soul. The soul, in the sense of *Jiva*, is a manifestation of the Supreme Atman through the medium of the mind. The mind is as much physical as the body, though much subtler and more transparent than the latter. In this sense there can be a plurality of individual souls, but not of ultimate essences or realities. A plurality of realities would make the realities individual beings and consequently transient in nature. If the monads of Leibniz are distinguishable individualities, they cannot be eternal and immortal. If Leibniz means by his monads minds and not spiritual essences in the sense of the Atman, the Vedanta would agree with Leibniz that the monads are many. But as ultimate realities they cannot be so, for reality can only be one. Plurality is impossible without spatiality, and reality is above space.

Leibniz seems to think that the monads may even be destroyed by God. This is a great self-contradictory view held by him, for what is subject to destruction cannot be immortal; immortality implies eternal existence. What is eternal cannot be an effect or product of something else. Eternity does not begin somewhere in time. Naturally, the uncreated which should, at the same time, be non-spatial, has to be identified with the ultimate reality, which is God. Destruction in the sense of transformation of state may be brought about by God in regard to phenomenal objects, but not immortal beings like the monads of Leibniz. The *Jivas*, on

the other hand, are essentially indestructible beings, though their relative constitutions may undergo change in the process of evolution. Even here it is the psychic or mental body which constitutes the Jivahood that undergoes the change; for its essence, which is the Atman, is beyond all change. When it is said that the *Jivas* undergo the process of change in evolution, it must be remembered that only the factors that constitute Jivahood, or individuality, undergo change and not the basis of Jivahood, which is the Atman. Hence, for the Vedanta, there is the evolution of relative *Jivas* but not of ultimate realities. Even a miracle cannot destroy the ultimate essence of things.

It is very difficult for Leibniz to uphold the theory of an organic universe with the supposition that the monads, which are the ultimate essences of things, are individualities separate from one another. How can there be organic relation among entities which are windowless and do not admit of any relation? Yet, Leibniz attempts such a theory by making the monads mirrors reflecting one another. How can we conceive of reflection without relation? Leibniz merely seems to substitute the word reflection for interaction, for what is reflection if not action of one on the other? In the philosophy of the Vedanta, however, the organic unity of the universe is maintained by the admission of individuals which influence one another, not in the sense of causality in a space-time realm, but as universal influence exercised by one on others. In other words, every individual in the universe influences and bears relations to all others, which, again, influence and bear relations to it. In its theory of the phenomenal universe of individuals, the Vedanta is not far from Whitehead who propounds the philosophy of a perfectly organised universe of entities, which flow into one another to form a connected whole, ceasing to be individualities themselves. The monadology of Leibniz is applicable to the Vedanta philosophy of the relative universe of phenomenal individualities, but not to its theory of ultimate reality.

As for Leibniz, so for the Vedanta, there is no vacuum in the universe uninhabited by individuals. For both there is no dead matter, all matter is instinct with life, though it may not be perceptible to the senses. However, for the Vedanta, the individuals that fill the universe are not windowless entities, but influence one another tremendously. In an organic universe there cannot be uninfluenced bodies, for, if anything remains unaffected, it would detract from the organic character of the universe. The *Jivas*, in the Vedanta, do mirror the universe in themselves, but not as windowless substances disallowing interaction. The universe is a family of members which bear among themselves a relation of equality in essence and mutual harmonising and balancing of forces. To the Vedanta, the whole universe is filled not merely with minds but by the Universal Self, which is indivisible consciousness. Though the monads of Leibniz are said to be spiritual in nature, he appears to be contented with merely rising to the mental level and attributing to them as their essence what the Vedanta would call mind, and not consciousness. We should not identify mind with the spiritual consciousness, for the former is subject to change and modification, it functions in a space-time world and it forms the individuality of a being; while the latter transcends individuality and exists as the common essence and reality underlying all individualities.

Leibniz holds that the monads are moved by an inner necessity and not by outward action. We have in the philosophy of the Vedanta a grand synthesis of the subjective and the objective approaches, where inner necessity and outward compulsion mean the same thing. By inner necessity we have to understand the supreme law of the Absolute which works from within as the Self of all things, but which also acts from without on account of its omnipresence. The individual is not really cut off from the external universe; the universe is its own outward environment. As there is only one Self in the universe, it cannot be confined to any particular individual to act as an inner necessity as

distinguished from outward impulsion. The one Absolute is felt inside and outside with equal force as necessity as well as compulsion. To the Vedanta, Ishvara is the one reality of the universe and the individuals are not really different from Him. Obviously, therefore, he should act in a universal manner and not as restricted to any particular individual. The difference between internality and externality arises on account of a defect in individual perception, which always works on the basis of the false notion that the subject of perception is different from the objects perceived outside. Individual action and cosmic law, free-will and universal determination, effort and grace must be one and the same in a unitary universe grounded on the Absolute Self.

The Vedanta would agree with Leibniz that there are no leaps or jumps in the arrangement of the individual souls in the universe. Everything is organically connected with everything else. There is nothing private, secret or hidden anywhere in the universe. All thoughts and actions are at once made public, a property of the universe the moment they arise or take place. Selfishness is, therefore, an illusion which has no meaning whatsoever. The good of the individual ought to be necessarily the good of the universe, and if any individual attempts in ignorance for what it thinks to be its own private good, it shall be defeated in its attempt. Every action receives a reaction from the universe outside; the universe ever maintains its equilibrium and never permits a disturbance from any of its parts. In this theory, however, the Vedanta rests on its doctrine of the Absolute as the sole reality of the universe, which is the reason why there is an organic unity among individuals. Without the Absolute Self there can be neither an explanation of an organic unity nor even its existence. It is because of the existence of the Absolute that an individual is capable of representing a universal situation in any given condition of its phenomenal existence.

There is, in the philosophy of the Vedanta, too, a hierarchy of degrees of perception and position among the individual souls. But this hierarchy is purely relative, valid only in the changing universe. Here, we have to remember that by the word `universe' the Vedanta means not merely the visible physical phenomena but also the subtle and the causal backgrounds of these phenomena, ranging beyond sense-perception. The hierarchy of souls begins with the body of Virat and ends in Ishvara, Who is the supreme cause of the universe. Here, again, we have to add a note that this hierarchy is not of ultimate realities but of phenomenal individualities. The individuals form a graded series of greater and greater approximations to Perfection as they are situated nearer and nearer to the consciousness of the Absolute. Every higher individual soul, on account of its greater approximation to the Absolute, transcends all lower ones in knowledge, power and in every aspect of being.

The Vedanta does not formulate two universal governments: the teleological hierarchy of souls and the mechanistic phenomena of the physical universe. For it these two aspects of the universe are not independent of each other but form two phases or appearances of one connected whole. Even according to the view of Leibniz himself, matter is spirit itself sensuously perceived. On this supposition there is no need for two kinds of governments—it is the one law of God that works in the same way both in the physical and psychic universe. What is applicable to bodies is applicable also to minds, though the former on account of their being contained in the realm of space-time appear to be governed by the laws of mechanics and do not seem to give any hint of a design or purpose in their motions. The realms of mechanism and purpose appear to present themselves as different from each other on account of a serious defect in the ways of our perceptions, viz., the separation of space-time phenomena from the mental ones, in spite of the fact that bodies are expressions of minds. The psychic universe has two aspects: the cosmic and the individual. The Cosmic

Mind becomes the cause of the physical bodies as such, while the individual minds, which are limitations and reflections of the Cosmic Mind, become secondary creators not of bodies as such but of bodily relations and the experiences rising from them. Taken as a whole, the universe is an undivided constitution where an ultimate distinction between mechanistic and teleological laws cannot be made. The appearance of these two laws is due to a twofold phase in which the universe presents itself to the perception and conception of man. Leibniz, however, tries to bring about a reconciliation between mechanism and teleology, which is quite acceptable to the Vedanta.

Logical truths become identical with metaphysical realities only when the former are not confined to mere contents of human thought. It is the extension of human laws of thinking to the external universe that makes Leibniz think that the universe works according to logical and mathematical laws which hold good in the life of man. He even thinks that God, too, is bound by mathematical and logical laws and that a possible world that is created should not go counter to these laws. It is to be remembered that there is a great difference between the ways in which the individual minds function and the laws according to which the universe works. Though man is a part of Nature, he is not identical in quality with the objects of the universe in their essence. Physically, man is a part of the universe of physical bodies, and here he is identical in quality with the objects of the universe. But his mind is not identical in quality with the Cosmic Mind, for the human mind is not merely a quantitative limitation but also a reflection which divests the Cosmic Mind of its original, independent and indivisible nature. The universe as it is in itself and God, Who is the Soul of the universe, transcend the laws of relative thinking characteristic of the human mind. It is the common mistake of supposing that the universe is merely a collective totality of different individual constitutions that makes one come to the erroneous conclusion that the laws of human thought

apply to the cosmic reality. God is beyond mathematical and logical laws which are valid only in a space-time world. The law of God transcends even the laws of the functioning of living organisms, though the latter too work in a manner different from that of mathematics and logic. If the laws of man and the laws of God were one, man would have easily perceived objectively the existence and the workings of God. The truth is that God is above even the conception of man; even the nature of the universe does not allow itself to become a content of the human mind. The laws of the universe and the laws of God defy human thinking, which is clear proof of the fact that there is a difference between human laws and objective universal laws.

Leibniz thinks that this is the best of several possible worlds created by God. The Vedanta tells us that there are different worlds of varying natures and that this is not necessarily to be considered the best of all possible worlds. *Bhu-loka* or the physical world is the lowest in a series of worlds culminating in *satya-loka* or the highest world of truth. There are transparent permeable worlds which reflect the divine consciousness in a greater degree than this physical world does. Worlds are created by Ishvara with due regard to the latent impressions embedded in the unmanifested minds of the unliberated individuals lying dormant and ready for manifestation at the end of the previous cycle. God does not create the world in an arbitrary manner, but draws the stuff of the world from the unmanifested potencies of the individuals to be created, which are to become the constituents of the would-be universe. We cannot say that any world is the best, unless it bears the highest approximation to the absolute Truth. The worlds that are created are merely fields provided for the experience of the different *Jivas*, or individuals, that inhabit the universe. The nature of the world that is created is just suited to bring about the necessary conditions required for the evolution of the individuals in a particular state of their existence. God creates the world not because it is good or

bad, but because it is necessary for the purpose of cosmic evolution.

The theory of monads within monads is akin to the theory of the Yoga-Vasishtha that there are worlds within worlds. The worlds differ from one another not merely in quantity but also in quality, and the Yoga-Vasishtha tells us that these worlds can even interpenetrate one another without affecting one another or even being noticed by one another. How far Leibniz goes along this line is not made by him very clear, though he makes it possible for organisms to be contained in another organism.

JOHN LOCKE

John Locke, as an empiricist, refutes the rationalistic doctrine of innate ideas. There are no inborn truths for Locke. All knowledge is empirical, received through the senses. The mind has no private truths. It is originally a tabula rasa, a blank tablet, on which external things make their impression through the senses. Even our inward ideas are products of outward sensations. The mind cannot have its own ideas independent of sense-perception. We know nothing that is not perceived through the senses or reflected by the mind on the basis of sense-perception. Sensuous and reflective experience is therefore the ground of all our knowledge. Sensation and reflection constitute the whole of our experience. The mind formulates ideas and reflects on the basis of sense-perception. Simple ideas received by means of sense can be converted into complex ideas by the mind; but the mind does not create new ideas, nor destroy them.

Locke distinguishes between ideas produced by mere sensation, which may not correspond to the actual properties of things outside, and those which really correspond to them. The qualities of things which create ideas through sensations and which do not correspond to their real properties are called secondary qualities, while those qualities in things which produce sensations and ideas corresponding to their inherent properties are called primary qualities. Solidity, extension etc. are considered to be the real properties of things and so they are primary qualities, while colours, sounds etc. are not qualities inherent in things, and so they are secondary qualities. The primary qualities are really present in things, while the secondary ones are not. Our knowledge is confined to the perception of the secondary and the primary qualities, received through sensations, external and internal, though the mind can convert our simple ideas of these sensations into complex ones. Our ideas of things or substances are derived by sensation and reflection; the substances are merely assumed as existent on

account of the sensation of the qualities and the formation of the ideas. Substance, mode and relation are just complex ideas of sensations and cannot pretend to be anything more. We have only a representation in our minds of the real things outside; we do not perceive them directly. What we know are only the secondary and primary qualities, not the substances in which they inhere.

The world outside is independent of the mind. It is the presence of the real objects that causes in us real sensations. The world consists of substances, in which qualities and actions inhere. According to Locke, there are two kinds of substances: bodies and souls. We perceive bodies and have a clear and immediate idea of our soul. We know bodies through sensation and the soul by reflection. Thought is an activity which inheres in the soul. Bodies are material and souls immaterial. From the perception of physical qualities their basic substance is assumed, for qualities cannot simply hang in the air, they must have a substratum. Similarly from the observation of mental operations, a notion of their basis, a spiritual soul, is formed.

Locke admits that there is interaction between body and mind, both of which are real beings. All our ideas are the results of the action of bodies on our minds. The soul experiences changes on account of its being acted on by bodies outside. Locke does not think that our perception of the external world is clearer than our notion of the reality or existence of the soul, or that we are surer of the nature of bodies than that of souls. He would rather say that our idea of the soul and its action is clearer and more distinct than that we have regarding material bodies. Our knowledge of bodies outside is not certain knowledge; the secondary qualities which we perceive do no represent the reality of things. The secondary qualities are produced not by the things as such, but by the primary qualities which inhere in things and which really belong to things. The primary qualities really represent things.

But Locke tells us that bodies affect not minds or consciousness, but only bodies, and physical motion can affect only physical motion. How, then, can Locke justify his theory of representationism, which holds that we receive mental images of physical substances that exist outside in reality? This is a difficulty which Locke does not seek to solve. He merely adds that this is possible on account of God's arranging the properties of bodies and of motion in such a way that they can act thus. He, however, becomes bold when he says that we cannot even understand how bodies act on bodies, or how motion produces motion. When we are content to be ignorant of this mystery, why not hold the same attitude towards the action of bodies on senses and minds, seems to be Locke's rejoinder to our objection to his theory of knowledge. We end in mystery. He is satisfied with telling us that we have sensations in this way, and there ends the matter. He is not concerned with the question how they are caused.

Locke is sometimes very candid in doubting whether it is minds or souls alone that think or whether matter, too, can think. When we do not know the essential nature of things, how can we say that minds alone think and not matter? Perhaps what we call soul is only matter, and perhaps matter can be conscious. Locke's misgivings in regard to this problem lose much of their value when we become alive to the fact that what is important is not whether the source of consciousness is matter or mind but that consciousness is the essential characteristic of experience. When we attribute consciousness to matter, what we actually do is to deny the materiality of matter, and to make it a conscious entity; in other words, what we apparently call matter becomes soul in reality. Anyway, the fact remains that the essential nature of the Self or the experiencer is consciousness, name it matter or soul.

In spite of these misgivings that he has, Locke appeals to commonsense and admits that there are two substances:

material and mental. Material bodies, according to him, are constituted of minute corpuscles or atoms (or perhaps molecules) which are endowed with the primary qualities. These form the essential active elements of which matter is the embodiment. These again are the bases of the secondary qualities. But Locke says that we cannot know these corpuscles, what their properties are, how they are united, how they act or move. One is tempted to add that Locke could have as well said that we do not know what matter consists of. For his corpuscular theory does not in any way increase the fund of our knowledge. It only states something together with a note that we do not know what is thus stated. That the constitution of matter empirically presents itself as a conglomeration of minute particles—call these corpuscles, atoms or molecules—the Vedanta has no objection to admit. For it matter is governed by the laws of space-time and mechanical motion, as long as our perception or observation of matter is limited to the laws to which space, time and causation are subject. Only it would add that this is not all that we have to say about matter. Matter has a higher nature and purpose, which the senses cannot comprehend, and which points to the realisation of a perfection that transcends human nature and its laws. Physical and chemical laws are not denied; only we are advised not to forget that these laws are valid only in the phenomenal world of sense and understanding and that they cannot pretend to explain the final nature of things. Reality is not confined to what we experience empirically.

Locke, like Descartes, admits a third substance, viz., God. He tries to prove the existence of God not from innate ideas, as Descartes has done—but from sense-experience. According to Locke, we form an idea of God by enlarging or carrying to infinity the laws and objects of our sensations and reflections. Existence, extension, knowledge, power etc. are what we experience, and their infinitude is our idea of God. We do not know God's essence or reality. To the Vedanta, the existence of God is known intuitively, not

through sensations. It is not possible for us to form an idea of unity by accumulating the materials supplied to us by the senses. A collection of particulars may give us a vast universe of plurality, but our conception of God points to the reality of something which is not only an undivided wholeness but Consciousness in essence. Consciousness does not become an object of the senses, for what we know through the senses are material bodies. We have an immediate intuitive perception of the existence of Consciousness, which is not deduced from some other premises. Consciousness itself is the fundamental premise from which all other facts are experienced or logically deduced. No doubt, this intuitive perception of the existence of an Infinite Being or Consciousness is not very clear and remains indistinct and hazy in ordinary individuals, and so this admission of the fact of the existence of an Infinite Consciousness is clothed in empirical attributes, such as unlimited extension in space, endless existence in time, limitless knowledge and power, and so on. The Vedanta further says that the essential characteristics of God, as we conceive of Him, are the opposites of the experiences we have in ordinary life. We observe that the world is changing and so we conceive of God as its changeless and eternal substratum. We perceive that objects of our knowledge are inert in nature and so we endow God with supreme intelligence. We experience limitation and pain here; so we conceive of God as absolute freedom and bliss. But it does not mean that God is merely an embodiment of these negative attributes which appear to be the counter-correlatives of relative experience. God, to the Vedanta, is above our conception of existence, knowledge, power and bliss. He is absolutely transcendent and His positive nature cannot be known by us except in direct realisation. Locke also gives us the usual cosmological and teleological proofs for the existence of God, stating that man, who, he knows, is a real being, must have a cause, and the eternal cause of all real beings must be a perfect being that exists and is real. In fine, it is to be noted that Locke's

position that objects exist, but they cannot be known; that the soul exists, but it cannot be known; and that God exists, but He cannot be known, leads to great difficulties which he did not foresee, and naturally gives way to the conclusion that we know nothing at all except only sensations and ideas. He paves the way to the mentalism of Berkeley and the scepticism of Hume.

That the mind remains a blank tablet when one is a child is not acceptable to the Vedanta, for the mind of even a child is filled with several impressions of past lives, though dormant and unexpressed. We have examples of child-geniuses, which defy Locke's theory of crass empiricism. If we understand by innate ideas those lying latent in the mind, being results of experiences one had in previous lives, we cannot deny that innate ideas are present even in the mind of a child. Not only this; we have innate ideas of a different kind, too. The conviction that we have in regard to the existence of an experiencing self and as its implication the existence of God is certainly not derived from sense-experience. It is embedded in our minds as a necessary and universal truth. Even the truths of mathematics and logic are not exclusively derived from sense-experience. Though the material necessary for the formulation of mathematical and logical laws is received by us through sensations, the laws themselves are not got from empirical observation; they are inherent in the mind itself as its essential make-up and method of working. Kant has shown how empiricism does not give us the whole of truth.

Locke merely states that matter exists, though it cannot be known independent of the primary and the secondary qualities. It only means that we know only these qualities and to posit a matter beyond them is unwarranted. It would mean that we know the existence of substances through inference and not perception. The secondary qualities are the effects of a mutual interaction of the perceiving subject and the perceived object and thus do not form properties of

matter. The same thing can be said of the primary qualities, for they too are known to us only through the senses. Thus even the primary qualities would not give us a true representation of things as such. If it is said that extension, solidity etc. are universally perceived, we may say that colours, sounds etc. are too perceived universally. And if it is said that colours, sounds etc. are not perceived to be the essential properties of things, we add that there is no warrant whatsoever to consider even the primary qualities as the essential properties of things. The primary qualities too are just reactions produced by the interaction of the subject and the object. We never perceive the primary qualities without the secondary qualities. By this it would mean that we cannot make a distinction between the primary and the secondary qualities, which means that we know nothing real in itself, and that we cannot know anything beyond these qualities. Locke could not anticipate the consequences of his suppositions; we notice these when his views are carried to their logical limits by Berkeley and Hume.

Locke thinks that the moral ideas come to us from outside, and that there is no absolute necessity or universality about them. As with the knowledge of objects outside, so with the moral commands. They do not come from within but from without. Locke says that we teach moral precepts to children who, when they grow up, think that these precepts are received from God or from the inner conscience. Right and wrong are notions framed in accordance with the laws learnt form outside. People frame these rules keeping in view the acquisition of happiness and the avoidance of pain. Locke's view is that what tends to pleasure is called by us good and what brings pain evil. Public happiness and the happiness of oneself determine goodness. Locke says that God has so arranged things that virtue and happiness go together, so that virtue is necessary for the attainment of happiness. When the public approve of an act we call it virtuous. The Vedanta, on the other hand,

tells us that ethics is based on the metaphysics of reality. Morality is not what is sanctioned by public opinion or what is conducive to mere pleasure or happiness. The right is that which directly or indirectly becomes conducive to the realisation of the Absolute and has nothing to do with the social position of man. It may be true that we learn many of the moral principles by receiving instructions from others, but this does not mean in any way that these principles are just conventional rules and have no absolute validity. What is taught as a moral precept is expected to conform to the law of the Self-realisation of the individual. Moreover, there are certain moral principles which present themselves as inner commands, though these commands can be known only by a highly cultured and purified conscience and understanding. To the Vedanta, what is good or virtuous is not what is merely considered to be in accordance with the methods of acquiring social happiness. The Vedanta would agree with the view that virtue is that which tends to happiness only when happiness is understood in the sense of the beatitude of the Absolute. Human happiness is not the goal of virtue or goodness. The Vedanta notices that man is never satisfied with anything that is provided to him in this world, and so there is no such thing as a real happiness which he may seek after. The right or the good has therefore to be defined as that which is conducive to unsurpassed happiness, which is the bliss of God-Being. Even the public good should be in conformity with this highest good, which can be realised only in the Divine. It is needless to say that one's own good is non-different from this. The concomitance of virtue with happiness is not an accidental happening or the result of an arbitrary decree from God outside. Virtue is the name we give to the nature of our thoughts, words and actions when they conform to the law of the attainment of real happiness, which is the centre of Absolute-Experience. It is not fear of punishment that determines virtue or goodness but a higher need, which is a manifestation of the supreme urge for Self-realisation. We may have individual morality, social morality,

political morality or different provinces of application of the moral principles, but all these have to be in perfect agreement with the universal law of the Absolute. What we call virtue, goodness or a moral law is not a creature of man's mind, but the very form that is taken in this world by the universal law of the Divine. All crave for unlimited happiness, though it cannot be had in this world. This eternal longing points to the existence of a Supreme Being in which all our aspirations find their consummation.

GEORGE BERKELEY

Berkeley pushes forward the arguments of Locke and asks: if our knowledge is confined to sensations and reflective operations or ideas, how can we know that there is a real and independent world outside? When our consciousness is the only thing that we directly know, it becomes impossible for us to know the existence of an outside world. Further, the existence of a spatial and material world would, he thinks, deny the existence of God, for it would limit Him and thus cancel His validity. Berkeley seeks to refute atheism and irreligion by denying the existence of the world of matter.

The existence of a thing, according to Berkeley, consists in its being perceived. Our thoughts and ideas, again, have their existence in their being perceived. Our sensations, too, have their existence in their being perceived. By "being perceived" he means, of course, "to be experienced in some way or the other". How can we know that these exist when they are not perceived or contained in our consciousness? An object, I say, exists, because I perceive it, feel it. Even the primary qualities of Locke are as unintelligible as the secondary qualities. We have no way of knowing if anything exists at all other than these qualities. To assert the existence of a thing when no minds perceive it is, to Berkeley, unwarranted. Hence the objects which are said to exist outside are really perceptions in the mind.

In the Vedanta, creation by the mind has three phases. There is a secondary creation or rather imagination, which can be attributed to individual minds. These individual minds cannot affect the realities of things as such. When a perceiving individual comes in relation to an external object, what happens is that the external object greatly influences the mental condition of the individual, and the individual, in turn, perceives in the object those characteristics which lie latent in its mind. In essence, the individual's mental constitution gets unconsciously objectified in the perception of an object. Nothing can be perceived as it is, but everything

is perceived as modified by the relations which the mind of the perceiving individual bears to it. This projection of the inward constitution towards the external object is called *Jiva-srishti.* The objects themselves, in their independent capacity, belong to the creation of the Cosmic Mind which is independent of and is superior to the individual mind. This latter process of the manifestation of objects may be called primary creation or Ishvara-*srishti.* The latter process of creation has universal validity and reality. There is also a third way in which objects get influenced by mental phenomena; and that is the condition of objects when they are conceived of as being acted on by the collective totality of the individual minds existing in the universe.

It does not, however, mean that there is nothing outside our individual perceptions or ideas. Every externalised perception should have a basis or support. There cannot be even an appearance without a substratum or reality. The basis of our perceptions or sensations is a material world outside, which, again, has its support or reality in God, the Supreme Spirit. Berkeley would say that the idea of a support is itself an imaginary abstraction. But, to the Vedanta, the idea of a support does not arise through any such abstraction, for it is the necessary implication of the irrefutable existence of our individual beings. The Vedanta, however, would accept Berkeley's position that the world is not extra-mental in the sense that it is a perception of the totality of minds or of the Mind of God. That other minds also perceive the same objects as I perceive proves not the independent existence of the objects, but that all minds are limited to a similar constitution. A different constitution of minds would make them perceive the world in quite a different manner, with laws governing it different from the present ones.

The relation between dream-experience and waking experience would give us a solution to the problem of the relation between individual perception and universal

perception. It will be observed that the subject of dream-experience is differentiated by a knowledge-relation from the objects constituting the world of dream-experience. In the waking state too we find that the individual perceiver is differentiated by a knowledge-relation from the external objects which form the contents of the world of waking-experience. But the subject in dream as well as all its objects together with the space and time of dream are included and transcended in the mental constitution of the waking individual. We will be able to account for our experiences in this world only by explaining the presence of the waking subject and all the objects of the waking experience in the Universal Mind which we call God. Berkeley, too, says later as a modification of his previous doctrine, that the objects, if they are not contained in my mind, may be in the mind of some other spirit, or in the Mind of God, thus proving that matter cannot ultimately have an extra-mental reality, though it may not be contained in any individual mind.

Berkeley establishes the existence of an eternal Spirit, which is the cause of our sensations, by the observation of the fact that our sensations are not voluntary actions; they occur independently of our willing them to be or not to be. Moreover, our sensations are stronger than our imaginations, for they present a greater reality with greater steadiness and order. Berkeley here approaches the distinction made in the Vedanta between *Jiva-srishti* and Ishvara-*srishti* when he says that our imaginations are less real, being only images of things represented or copied, while the ideas of sensations received from the eternal Spirit are real things. In the latter modified aspect of his theory, Berkeley comes nearer to the Advaita-Vedanta, for which the universe has a relative reality, more real than the imaginations of the individuals, and the universe is a manifestation of God Himself. Materiality and mechanism are not in God, but His form as the universe appears to be so endowed on account of its being made a sense-object in the realm of space-time.

Berkeley thinks that by the refutation of the existence of an extra-mental matter and reducing it to mere ideas, he has also refuted idolatry, for people will not worship their own ideas. It was already said that in the Vedanta matter is not an idea in any particular individual mind, but is outside it, though it loses its materiality when it becomes the content of the Cosmic Mind. Idols and images of worship cannot become mere ideas in the minds of people, for they are outside their minds, though within the Cosmic Mind. Matter is not non-existent to the individuals. The use of idols in worship has an inner meaning and significance. The worshipper does not usually confine his idea of God to the particular idol that he worships, but he makes it a representation or a symbol of the presence of God, Who is infinite and immaterial. The mind finds it hard to contemplate on the super-sensuous Infinite Spirit and so we take idols as aids in the concentration of mind in the process of spiritual meditations. What becomes the object of contemplation is not the material of which the idol is made, but the supreme attributes of God which are superimposed on it. Even supposing that the worshipper of an idol limits his conception of God to the form of the idol, the worship in no way loses its value. By constant meditation on the idol as the form of God the mind begins to see it everywhere and loses consciousness of the other objects of the world. The meditator reaches a stage where he is taken beyond the idea of the idol and gets absorbed in the divine consciousness, which is the supreme goal of meditation. Those who level diatribes against worship of idols do not thoroughly grasp the psychology of such worship and the metaphysics behind it.

DAVID HUME

In Hume we see the final logical consequences which an empirical theory of knowledge entails. The result is scepticism. We have no certain, self-evident knowledge of anything. Our knowledge is confined to impressions and ideas, and so we are not in a position to assert the existence either of material objects or of spiritual entities. Our notion of causality, that a particular effect is necessarily produced by a particular cause, is the result of our association of ideas, a habitual or customary observation of certain phenomena which appear to have such relations. These apparent relations do not carry with them any necessity or universality. Sensations or impressions are separated from one another and so do not have in them anything universal or necessary. What is open to us is only a probability and no certainty. Particular causes may not produce particular effects. Causality rests on mere instinct or belief. We do not know of any uniformity, regularity or certainty in the working of Nature. Everything becomes a matter of doubt.

We are limited to perceptions and images. When the notion of causality itself is unfounded, how can we be sure that our perceptions are caused by external objects? Though we are accustomed to observe causal relations among our ideas and perceptions, we do not see any ground for supposing this relation between perceptions and objects. What are things when they are divested of the primary and secondary qualities? They are nothing. The only objects known to us are ideas and impressions. We have no right to assume the existence of objects or soul or God from mere ideas or impressions. Where is certainty in causality, which is only a creature of custom or habit? We have to limit ourselves to our world of impressions and ideas and not go beyond this. Even of the true nature of the empirical world, we can say nothing. We know only our ideas which have neither necessity nor universality in them.

For Hume, no metaphysics of reality is possible. He says that we can know nothing of anything real in itself, neither

world nor soul nor God. We cannot have therefore a rational cosmology, a rational psychology or a rational theology. We know of no such thing as a world of enduring things or substances. Hume denies the existence of a permanent soul by declaring that we know no soul as an immaterial substance. In fact we know no substances at all, either externally or internally. We know only passing ideas disconnected from one another. When we try to know an immutable soul, what we catch are mere ideas, perceptions, a bundle of thoughts, a mere flux and not anything simple and indivisible. We do not know whether God is, for we have no reason to believe that the universe should have a cause. We cannot infer the existence of God from our minds, for our minds are constantly changing, and so these cannot prove the existence of a God Who is unchanging and eternal.

It will be noticed that though Hume doubts everything and believes that all that we know is of a doubtful nature, he has no doubts regarding the certainty of the truth of his own theories. A consistent sceptic cannot be certain whether what he declares to be the truth has any certainty in it. But it is obvious that a negation of the validity of one's own position would end in an utter confusion of thought. There is no use in saying: 'I doubt the certainty of my views, too'; for here, again, is a certainty that my views may not be certain, or are not certain. So, a sceptic like Hume becomes perforce a dogmatist in regard to his own position. It was the great Descartes who came to the conclusion that the basis of doubt itself cannot be doubted. The doubter cannot doubt that he is or is engaged in a particular mental or physical activity. A self-evident consciousness of an indivisible self is implied in all the enterprises upon which we embark. Through all the arguments of the sceptic there glares the consciousness of self, without which even scepticism cannot be. Who observes the order of sensations, of causal relation—he is the self. Who associates ideas, who doubts—he is the self. There is an awareness of the observation of the order of sensations, there is awareness of the customary observation of causal

relation, there is awareness of doubt, there is awareness of the idea that sensations are discrete in nature—this awareness is the self. Even the fact of a plurality or diversity of sensations cannot be known without a unitary consciousness of self. This truth is too clear and self-evident to need any explanation. The persistent notion of order and regularity, uniformity or unity in Nature, even supposing that this is in mere imagination, is enough implication of the existence of an indivisible self, which has to be identified with God on account of its indivisibility.

Hume says that life would be impossible if we do not believe in causality and regularity or uniformity in Nature. The very notion of the necessity for life and the impossibility of disregarding the uniform laws of life posits as an implication the existence of an immutable consciousness or self. Life has an urge for discovering uniformity; this urge is super-sensuous and demands an acceptance of a uniform and unitary consciousness, in spite of the sceptic's intellectual contention that nothing beyond a plurality of sensations and ideas is known to us. The involuntary urge for recognising system and unity in life and Nature suggests the oneness of existence, which should at once be equated with the oneness of Consciousness.

If, as Hume says, we have not any intuitive notion of a simple indivisible soul, we would not be living beings as we are. But for such a unitary soul we would not feel that we are wholes or integrated personalities. Personality will fall to pieces, every constituent of the personality will drop away in inconceivably minute shreds, but for an indivisible consciousness supporting the personality. There would not be even the disintegrated pieces of personality, in short, nothing but insanity, if an immutable soul were to be consistently and seriously denied. Without a self there would be no consciousness of identity of personality or of a surviving individual. Even the union of ideas in imagination would not be possible without an indivisible consciousness

of being. Hume could not speak of even the customary ideas of unity or of relations, but for an indivisible consciousness of self. Without a permanent self, there can be no thoughts, no ideas, no impressions, nothing. But Hume makes the statement that there is belief in the continued existence of objects, a mere belief no doubt, not a certainty. But from where does this belief arise? How is the notion of the continued existence of objects made possible at all? How is even this belief possible? How can there be even an instinct for uniformity and unity? It is not difficult for one to observe that all these notions—those ideas, instincts or beliefs regarding continuity, uniformity and unity—are contained in an indubitable consciousness, which clamours for absolute unity and order everywhere. Does this not suggest that there is an eternal Self which cannot be denied, however much we may try, and which is itself the essence of uniformity and unity? Hume does not seem to have thought over this problem. And how can Hume reconcile his denial of an indivisible self with his theory of the association of ideas in the observation of causal relation? Without some consciousness of unity and organised existence even Hume could not have framed consistent and intelligible ideas in his mind.

The existence of God is not implied merely in our thoughts, for they are changing, and God is accepted to be an unchanging being. True; but God's existence is implied in the implication of the existence of thoughts, implied in our non-mediate awareness of self. In this consciousness of self are comprehended ideas of eternity, infinity and immutability. Further, the notion of God is implied in the notion of the finitude, changefulness and imperfection characteristic of our individualities and of the external visible universe. Hume's contention that our analogy from the finite to the infinite may even warrant the ascription of mortality and physical embodiment to God is totally missing the point in question. Mortality and embodiment are not the essential characteristics of the individuals; their essential nature is

consciousness, indivisible and unchangeable, which alone is attributable to the essential nature of God. The self cannot be doubted and so God, too. Hume could not argue or even be without this consciousness which is at once soul and God.

Hume, however, contradicts himself when he believes in the uniformity of Nature as a certainty in calling miracles as violations of the laws of Nature. He thinks that a miracle is incredible, that the interference of Providence in Nature is impossible, for these appear to him to go counter to the established order of the universe. We have, in the Vedanta, the grand truth declared that Nature and God are essentially one and that there is no such thing as a miracle in the sense of an event that contradicts the laws of Nature. We call something a miracle when it transcends the powers of the human faculties of knowledge. Really, there is no such thing as a miracle or a wonder. It is all quite natural to the laws of the universe to operate in that way, though there are many things in Nature which man cannot understand and which Nature sometimes manifests before his eyes. God does not interfere with the way of the world as an external authority, but what we call the work of Providence is really the natural manifestation, in certain particularised ways, necessary for certain particular situations, of the eternal laws of God in Nature, which is His own Body.

Hume's interpretation of the freedom of the will would imply that there is a continuity of self-consciousness, though he denies this in theory. He says that we become responsible for what we do when our actions proceed as effects from our impulses within. But if we are to be sincere followers of his theory, neither free-will nor determinism can have any meaning for us. There cannot be responsibility for action unless there is consciousness of an enduring self, which Hume denies. He says, human volition follows certain psychological laws, but according to his original theory the observed laws are matters of mere custom or association of ideas, and so they cannot be made arguments for attributing

responsibility or free-will to man. Further, as Hume himself admits, free-will loses its meaning if we admit that we are perforce made to do an action by our involuntary impulses and emotions or the inward conditions which become responsible for the performance of the action, and which we could not avoid without ourselves becoming different persons. But what endows an action with the characters of the results of a responsible free-will is the consciousness of one's having done it, whether one has actually done it or not.

IMMANUEL KANT

Immanuel Kant is said to have been woken up by Hume from his ‘dogmatic slumber’ and brought about a ‘Copernican revolution’ in the field of philosophy. In Kant we begin to reap the ripe fruits of philosophy, for it is here that it shows signs of its having reached maturity and full development.

Kant discovers that neither empiricism nor rationalism is entirely correct, though each is partially true. His problem is therefore to take stock of the previous findings in philosophy and to construct his own critical philosophy or transcendental idealism. Kant begins by saying that knowledge is not completely derived from sense-experience. We cannot confine our knowledge to the senses, as Locke and Hume supposed. Hume committed the mistake of restricting experience to separate and distinct sensations, and from this false premise came to the false conclusion that there is nothing necessary or universal in knowledge. Sense-experience gives us only probabilities and not certainties. If there is a certain, necessary and universal knowledge, it must be independent of sense-experience. The necessity and universality about such knowledge is true even prior to sense-experience—it is *a priori*. We have in mathematics, for example, a knowledge which is necessary and universal; it is unaffected by what experience the senses may give us in the course of time. For never in the history of the world would an addition of seven and five cease to make twelve, and never have the principles of geometry been falsified in experience. Here is an instance of knowledge independent of sensations. Kant is here a dogmatist, for instead of asking *whether* synthetic judgements *a priori* are possible, he takes for granted that there is already such knowledge, and concerns himself with *how* synthetic judgements *a priori* are possible. He is only fired with the zeal for describing the anatomy and demonstrating the working of such knowledge, and considers, as against Hume, that to deny a necessary and universal knowledge would be a mere ‘scandal’.

Now, from where do we get such necessary and universal knowledge? Certainly not from sense-experience; for this knowledge remains independent of sense-experience. For Kant all knowledge is in the form of judgements. Genuine knowledge is a necessary and universal judgement. Sensations have nothing of the necessary or the universal in them. Hence genuine knowledge must be inherent in the very constitution of the understanding or mind itself, the very make-up of the mind, the necessary and fundamental law which determines the manner of all the functions of the mind. The mind is not a blank tablet, as Locke thought, not a passive recipient of sensations, but an active agent which modifies the form of the sense-material, gives it a different shape, casts it in the mould of order, unity and method, and reorganises its constitution. So in our knowledge we have material from the senses, unity and order from the mind or the understanding. Without sensations or perceptions knowledge is empty; without thinking or understanding knowledge is blind. Kant puts his whole problem thus: How are synthetic judgements *a priori* possible in mathematics, physics and metaphysics? The whole of his 'Critique of Pure Reason' is an attempt to answer this great question.

Kant observes that sensations by themselves are subjective states and have to be referred to space and time in order to acquire the character of objectivity in knowledge. Sensations provide matter, and space and time the form. In our processes of knowledge we first organise sensations by the application of the perceptual categories of space and time, and then again organise these perceptions by the application of the conceptual categories, the pure concepts and judgements, which are twelve in number. Sensations by themselves cannot give us knowledge; they have to get themselves arranged about an object in space and time, and then we say we have the perception of an object. Without the aid of space and time there can be no perception, for sensations independently give us no knowledge of any object. Space and time are the *a priori* modes or ways of

perception, and can also by themselves become contents of *pure* perception independent of objects. They are *a priori*, because they are the conditions necessary for the formation of sensations into perceptions. And as the laws of mathematics are the laws of space and time, they are *a priori* laws.

According to the empiricists, perceptions are the results of a spontaneous grouping of sensations; but to Kant this is brought about by a purpose that is detectable in the mind itself, in the sensibility of the understanding. Kant rejects the views of Locke and Hume and concludes that the understanding plays an important part in the formation of perceptions. Yet, perceptions, distinct and separated, cannot give us real knowledge. As the reformulation of sensations as perceptions is done by the application of the perceptual categories of space and time, so the perceptions are transformed into concepts by the application of the categories of the understanding. And as the sensations are grouped, arranged and united about objects in perception by means of the *a priori* laws of space and time, so perceptions are connected, related and organised by conceptions about the ideas of the categories of quantity, quality, relation and modality. The perceptions are cast in the moulds of these categories of the understanding and transformed into concepts and judgements. This becomes possible on account of the presence of a unifying consciousness or synthetic unity of apperception in us. The function as well as the essence of the understanding is this arrangement and organisation of sensations and perceptions. The connecting link between percepts and concepts is the time-form, which Kant calls the 'transcendental schema'. This order, this unity in sensations and perceptions is brought about by those laws inherent in the understanding or the mind itself, and not by the sensations themselves, as Locke and Hume thought. There is a tremendous organising capacity in the mind, and this capacity is *a priori*, independent of sense-experience. Kant recognises that the *things-in-themselves* cannot be the causes

of this organised character seen in knowledge, for we affirm their existence only by inference from the scattered sensations that we receive from outside. The capacity for order and unity has to be attributed to the mind or the understanding alone. The differences that are observed in the degrees of knowledge possessed by different persons prove that order is brought into sensations not by the sensations themselves but by the *a priori* laws of the mind, which is an active judge or law-giver and not a piece of wax passively receiving impressions from outside. The laws and the ordered unity of the world are therefore the laws and the ordered unity of the categories of the mind; what we call things are not things-in-themselves, but the categories of the mind alone, objectified in space and time. In other words, we see in things only the necessary and universal laws of our minds. It is the necessary and universal laws of the mind that recognise themselves in the objects of the world. Kant saves the world of physics, as he saved mathematics.

The charge that is usually levelled against Kant that he teaches naïve subjectivism is not justifiable. He does not say that any particular mind prescribes its laws to Nature, but he speaks of necessary and universal knowledge which, though confined to the categories of the mind or to the manner of perceiving things, is common to the minds of all men. But he makes the laws of things the laws of the human mind, though it may be that they are of all minds. The categories of our perception and conception, he says, control all knowledge and we can know nothing beyond them. Though sensations have to be supposed to be caused by certain things-in-themselves, these latter can never become objects of our knowledge, for our knowledge is limited to the categories. Kant here is in agreement with Locke in thinking that we cannot know things as such, though they have to be conceived to be the causes of our sensations. Kant, according to the Vedanta, is not correct in supposing that the logical categories of the human mind can so modify or affect the constitution of our knowledge that we know only the logical

categories and that what we call physical objects are only the objectifications of these categories of human thought. The Vedanta holds that the physical world is the manifestation of Ishvara, and that the *existence* of objects is independent of human thinking and of its logical laws, though the human mind contributes much in determining the *value* of the objects by projecting on them its own desires, feelings and emotions. It may be true that certain desires, feelings and emotions are common to all mankind; yet this universality of certain psychological conditions cannot be made a factor that can affect the existence of the physical objects. Logic is not the same as metaphysics, if by logic we mean the laws of mere human thinking and reasoning. Human thinking is not a part of reality in the sense of cosmic existence. Only the mind or will of Ishvara or God can have such reality and only the logic of this mind can be identical with the laws of a metaphysics of reality. And also it is only this cosmic mind that can modify the nature of the objects of knowledge by the categories or laws of its constitution. To the Vedanta the world is ideal in the sense that it is in the Idea of Ishvara, but not in the idea of any man, or even in the ideas of all men. Again, space and time and the physicality and externality of the objects of the universe cannot be considered to be realities from the point of view of Ishvara, for He is a spiritual Being, and the appearances of these, therefore, are to be understood as the necessary counterparts of the notion of our individual existence. The physical world has an existence independent of human thinking or willing, but it becomes dependent on thinking and willing when the human mind rises above itself and gets identified with the Mind of Ishvara. Thus the existence of the physical world appears to be and has to be accepted as independent of the human mind only so long as human individuality persists, and not when it is transcended in the Cosmic Mind. Again, the existence of the world as independent of the human mind and the existence of a Cosmic Mind of which it is a manifestation and whose laws determine its nature, are necessary postulates accepted

to offer a consistent and satisfactory explanation of our experiences in the world. They are relative, for they are valid only in relation to the individual, and only so long as individuality survives. The world is relative because it is dependent on the categories of space, time and causation, which have validity only in relation to the individual, and are more real than the thoughts or imaginations of the individual as long as the individual exists as such, but which are dependent on and controlled by the laws of the Cosmic Mind. To express the problem concisely: As long as an individual exists, other individuals too exist, which are as much real as itself, and there is a physical world which is as much real as all the individuals, and so not dependent on their thoughts or laws of thinking; as long as this state of affairs continues, there is to be accepted the existence of a Cosmic Mind or the thought of God, which is the author of the physical world and of all the individuals in it, and which completely determines the nature of the world with its laws, i.e., this independence of the physical world over individuals and thoughts, and this existence of the Cosmic Mind or the thought of God are necessary and unavoidable facts implied in individualistic experience. But when the individual mind is raised to the state of the Cosmic Mind, there would be neither the individual, nor the world; there would be only the Absolute-Experience. Ultimately, the world discloses its spiritual being. This explains in what way the world is independent or has extramental reality, in what way ideal or purely dependent on mind, in what way relative to the interaction of subject and object, and in what way non-existent. Here we see the glory of the Vedanta.

Kant recognises that though mathematics and the physical sciences are in conformity with the universal laws of thought and the system of logic, and so necessary and valid for every mind, this necessity and validity of theirs is limited to phenomena, and so they are relative. The world of sense-experience is an appearance, it does not consist of things-in-themselves, for they cannot be known, though they lie as the

background of all phenomena. Some interpreters of Kant object to his assertion of the things-in-themselves as dogmatic, for when the things-in-themselves cannot be known at all, as Kant says, how can their existence be asserted? That the things-in-themselves exist, they think, is an unwarranted assumption contrary to Kant's theory that nothing that is known is more than an appearance. Even the things-in-themselves ought to be restricted to the categories of the mind, for it is the mind that asserts their existence. Others try to save Kant from this charge by holding that his concept of things-in-themselves does not make them known as realities, but it is only a limiting concept which Kant has no objection to include within phenomena. The aim of this concept is only to point out the limits of possible knowledge or experience. But the Vedanta would go ahead of Kant as well as these critics of his and suggest to Kant himself that the things-in-themselves are not mere postulates or hypothetical suppositions as he would think, neither phenomena of the finite categories, nor even just limiting concepts, but intimations of a supermental reality, which Kant posited, even without his own knowing, through shades of a supersensuous intuition, and which he, by analogy from physical objects of perception, wrongly supposed to be many in number. Really there is only one Thing-in-Itself, the Eternal Spiritual Being, and not many things-in-themselves. Sometimes Kant even gives us a hint that the things-in-themselves are material objects, though their exact nature cannot be known by us, which would obviously be a lapse into the Lockain theory of representationism. How can we say that the objects are material when they are not known? Kant cannot make himself consistent unless he admits the thing-in-itself to be a spiritual essence, indivisible, and so infinite or non-dual.

Now Kant, with his theory of the categories and by limiting all knowledge to appearances, tries to give a deathblow to metaphysics, declaring with a hardened intellect that not only our knowledge of the objects of the

world, but also our knowledge of soul and God is an appearance, a phenomenon of the categories of the understanding. Metaphysical knowledge is limited to phenomena, there can be no metaphysics of 'being as being' or of the 'That which is'. All such metaphysics is involved in antinomies and paralogisms. Kant shows that we can prove that the world has a beginning in time, and also that it has no beginning in time; that a compound substance consists of simple parts, and also that it does not consist of simple parts; that there is freedom, and also that all things are determined; that there is an absolutely necessary being; and also that there is no such being. Reason cannot establish ultimate truths. We are caught in the grips of phenomenal experience from which we cannot extricate ourselves.

The greatness of Kant lies in that he has thoroughly investigated and grasped the powers and limits of reason, and knows to what extent reason can provide man with genuine knowledge. But his weakness is in that he stretches the functions of reason beyond their limits, to a province over which reason cannot have sway, and coming to the bitter decision that the things-in-themselves cannot be known, tried to floor all attempts to construct a metaphysics of reality. If Hume gave us scepticism, Kant appears to give us agnosticism. Both leave us in the same position as far as our knowledge of reality is concerned. Kant did not notice that his antinomies are not real contradictions but different perspectives, views of reality, all true at some time, at a particular stage in the development of the powers of our knowledge. Kant himself knows that this predicament in which we are landed by the antinomies is due to our falsely supposing that space, time and cause are external and independent of perception. When these forms of perception get identified with knowledge itself, in a manner different from that in which Kant's categories are contained in the understanding, all these antinomies get resolved in a wholeness of perception which is supersensuous intuition. As it was already shown, the world is real for purposes of

certain aspects of life, ideal for certain others, relative at some stage, and non-existent at another. These are not contradictions, but piecemeal views of reality given to the mind which cannot know it as a whole at one stroke. It may appear from an exclusively abstract point of view of the pure reason that our knowledge of reality is phenomenal, but we should say that this is merely an act of supererogation on the part of reason, and an untenable thesis. The effect cannot know its cause without its ceasing to be an effect. It is futile to know reality, as such, through the mind or the reason. Kant admitted this for a reason different from the one which the Vedanta gives. Kant limits experience to sense, understanding and reason, without caring to heed to their presuppositions; so he denies the possibility of a genuine metaphysics of reality. But to the Vedanta, experience does not consist merely in these; there is another faculty of knowledge on which these are based and without which these are meaningless, and which is in a position to build a sound metaphysics, comprehensive and satisfactory. This basis, this presupposition of all relative knowledge, is the soul, the self, the arguer, the doubter, the ground lying behind scepticism, phenomenalism and agnosticism, which is not a matter of doubt, not an appearance, not unknown.

The ideas of freedom and necessity, of the nature of causality and of a necessary being above the world, of an ultimate causeless cause, which for Kant are not above the phenomena of the categories of the understanding, hinge upon the problem of self, of an immutable, incorruptible, immortal, simple, indivisible, spiritual substance or being. For Kant such a self is inconceivable, our concept of it is involved in phenomena, it is not above the finishing categories; hence the concepts of the world and God, too, who bear relations to the self, are phenomenal. Kant says that we know ourselves not as we are but as we appear to ourselves through the categories. We know the world not as it is, but as it appears to us through the categories. We know God not as He is, but as He passes through the mill of our

understanding and reason. The world as such, soul and God are all things-in-themselves and so exist beyond experience.

We cannot, however, charge Kant with the guilt of denying soul, world and God altogether; for what he seems to say is that these cannot be known through sensation, perception, understanding or reason; else there would be no meaning in his positing the things-in-themselves. But the trouble with him is that he would not accept that we have any other kind of experience than the sensuous and the mental. He has, no doubt, the genius to conceive of an intellectual intuition which, he says, if we could possess it, would enable us see things face to face, at once in their true essences. But he denies its reality and accepts it only as a probability; we have only sensuous intuition, we know nothing supersensuous. He denies an immediate intuition of even our own selves and makes the self an object of the discursive reason. His opinion is that one knows *oneself* but not *one's self*. He smacks of Hume when he says that what we know of ourselves are only successive mental states, percepts, and nothing more. We have only a thought of self, not a perception of self, and this thought is a bundle of such states. Kant wavers between this view and the one that radically differentiates him from Hume, the admission of a synthetic or transcendental unity of apperception, a unifying ego, an I, which cannot be identified with a perception or a thought and without which no knowledge is possible. But this ego of Kant is different from the Atman of Vedanta, for the former is still an empirical form relating itself to empirical experience. Kant holds that his ego transcends empirical consciousness; but really it cannot do so, for it becomes in his hands an individualised will which ever presses beyond itself. But he distinguishes it from the empirical ego as the Vedanta separates the Atman from the Jiva. The notion of the self appears to Kant to be an object of the discursive reason because he deliberately makes it an object of the reason. We do not know our own existence through the reason, but we have an immediate intuitive

apprehension of our being identical with an indivisible consciousness. This fact is too clear to require extra contemplation over it. Our conscious being never becomes an object; it ever persists in being the ground and presupposition of all our processes of knowledge. If the self is to become an object, where is the knowledge of this object to subsist? This knowledge would require another self on which to base itself; and this process of reasoning would end in an infinite regress. The apprehension of the self does not admit of any relations, and *process* of knowing, any kind of duality in regard to itself. The Vedanta declares that there are certain spiritual laws which we daily experience in our own selves, though indistinctly on account of the presence of a veil of ignorance covering the self, and which exist even prior to the categories of the understanding. As Kant's *a priori* categories or principles of knowledge are universal and determine the nature of perceptions and things, so the Vedanta holds that there are principles of knowledge which are more universal and necessary than Kant's judgements and categories and which determine even these judgements and categories. Knowledge through the understanding is by no means the only possible one. There is a spiritual realisation of the Absolute, which is not a mere probability but a certainty, a certainty greater than that offered by the fact of our experience of an empirical world of bodies.

Kant is a person who knows, and yet knows not he knows. He makes suggestive statements, comes to the very borderland of reality, but stops there. This he does because he is unable to step beyond the realm of the understanding and finds himself hemmed in from all sides by the laws of the understanding. He says that the concepts or the ideas of the pure reason, the ideas of a unified world, soul and God, are merely regulative principles which reveal the limits of possible knowledge and assert that there is a transcendental reality beyond our possible experience. Now Kant does not know that his assertion of a transcendental reality is impossible merely with the aid of his categories. He owed the

possibility of this concept of things-in-themselves to a touch of the supersensuous intuition, though this intuition never came to him as a direct perception. He says that the things-in-themselves can be thought, though not known. Now, how does thought function? It does so through the categories. Can we apply the categories in our thinking the things-in-themselves? No. Then by what means does Kant think them? He cannot say that it is the reason and not the mind that thinks them, for even the reason functions with the categories. It is obvious then that he thinks the things-in-themselves with a faculty transcending the senses and the categories. And this is nothing short of supersensuous intuition.

Kant overlooks the fact that the reason always exhibits an irresistible confidence in its powers to apprehend the things-in-themselves in empirical perception. It refuses to yield to the threats of the understanding that what it knows are mere projections of the relative categories of possible knowledge. It is impossible to disregard the superhuman urge within us which is ever anxious to recognise the supreme need for the indivisible, the infinite, the real in us and in all things. Kant also forgets that he cannot account for the correspondence of the forms of the categories of the mind within with the material of sense-perception outside, unless there is a common conscious background, a unity underlying the two. Knowledge is possible because of an existence which is common to both the subject and the object. If the categories of the understanding do not bear a consciousness-relation to the material supplied by the senses, there would be no adaptation of the former to the latter. The relation between the mind within and the objects outside is a knowledge-relation, and this knowledge or consciousness should be an underlying unity covering both the knower and the known. In other words, knowledge conceived as the presupposition and ground of all possible human knowledge in empirical experience is universal

existence itself. It is this independent, omnipresent Existence-Consciousness that we term the Absolute.

If, as Kant thinks, the Ideas of reason have merely a regulative use, valid only in so far as they give a unity and order to our knowledge, and if we are to act merely *as if* their objects exist, we would be living in a world of fancies, imaginations, chimeras; nay, life would be impossible. The meaning that we instinctively discover in life detests any such propositions, and affirms a preciousness and value in existence that cannot be compared with anything we perceive in the world of sense. The Ideas of reason are not mere probabilities or future possibilities, but stand for an eternal fact that is the very basis of the entire structure of possible knowledge here. The possibility of having in our reason such Ideas arises not, as Kant thinks, on account of reason's abstracting the conditions from the conditioned, but by the very presuppositions made by the reason itself. We proceed not from the conditioned to the unconditioned, but from the unconditioned to the conditioned. We begin with a self-evident unconditioned consciousness which is in us, and without assuming which as a fact there can be no thought, no life. Even the functions of the Ideas of reason as pointers to the limits of experience imply the existence of the limitless, for a knowledge of what is beyond limits is at once included in our knowledge of limits. Descartes was confident that we cannot know ourselves as finite beings without referring this knowledge of ours to the existence of the infinite. Further, how can the conditioned ideas which we have been given by the conceptual categories give rise to the Ideas of the infinite, the unconditioned, the immortal? How can the Idea of the Absolute arise in us if it is not buried already in our own consciousness? How can even an idea or a notion or a concept of the Absolute or the infinite become possible if our consciousness is completely locked within the finite categories? Kant misses to discover in the Ideas of reason real *a priori* principles which logically precede the categories of the understanding. H.J. Paton, a well-known Kantian

scholar, tells us that Kant does not really seem to have argued from the existence of the given in experience to the things-in-themselves as its cause, but rather seemed to regard them as immediately present to us in all appearances. A knowledge that the world is phenomenal is based on an inner conviction, pointing not merely to a probability or a possibility but to the reality of all realities, and suggesting that an immutable being exists transcending phenomena. It is Kant's intellectual bias that prevents him from accepting these truths which shine before us as in daylight. To the senses the real, no doubt, appears as an abstract idea, for it is far removed from the reach of their knowledge. Kant shows a prejudice in favour of the sole authority of sense- knowledge when he disregards the claims of the Ideas of reason and relegates them to the limbo of probabilities. The organising capacity, the law and order and the passion for unity present in the mind prove the existence of a unitary and indivisible conscious self. Space and time, though empirically real, are transcendentally ideal, and the necessity and universality of the truths of mathematics which is possible only in spatial extension and in the time-form felt as a succession of homogeneous moments, and of physics which owes allegiance to the laws of mathematics in conformity with the categories of the understanding, emerges out of the mind as an outward phenomenal expression of the unity underlying the processes of all our knowledge. The immediate consciousness of self requires it to be recognised as unlimited, pervading all phenomena. This consciousness in its essence is the Supreme Being. It is the Ishvara of the Vedanta when viewed in relation to the world of experience; it is Brahman in its own being. As the categories of the understanding suit the sense-material in giving us knowledge, the Ideas of reason refer to Ultimate Reality, though we require a deeper insight to appreciate this fact. And even as the categories by themselves have no significance in knowledge without their adaptation to sense-material received in empirical perception, the Ideas of reason

have no significance of their own in knowledge if they do not agree with the Reality experienced in supersensuous intuition. These Ideas do not merely constitute a regulative method in life, but act as representations of the Reality existing by its own right. The systematic unity which the Idea of the Supreme Being gives to life is the shadow cast by the existence of the Supreme Being.

Kant's arguments against the ontological proof for the existence of God needs correction. His illustration that the idea of my having some thalers in my pocket book does not prove that they exist there is not applicable to our concept of God. What Kant needs to be told is that he could not have the idea of thalers if thalers did not have existence. What is important is not whether they exist in the pocket book or elsewhere, but that they exist; their existence or non-existence in the pocket book is irrelevant to the question of the Idea of God, for the Idea of God is the Idea of the omnipresent, the infinite, not something which may exist somewhere localised as in the pocket-book or outside it, and so such an Idea should imply the existence of what it points to, even as the idea of thalers proves that thalers do exist. The reason why Kant finds himself obliged to deny existence to God from the Idea of God is that he entirely cuts off thought from reality, while in fact thought at one stage of its being gets identified with reality. The cosmological argument for the existence of God depends on the ontological argument, and gets explained together with it. The contingent demands a cause, the non-contingent, the non-accidental, which is necessary to give completeness and a systematic character to experience. That such a cause does not exist cannot follow from the contingent nature of phenomena; on the other hand, contingent phenomena affirm an absolute ground. We are bound to admit the existence of an Intelligent Being on which phenomena depend. In his account of the physico-theological proof for the existence of God Kant makes God an Architect of the world building upon a hampering material, but does not

think that God can be shown to be the creator of the world, subjecting the world to His Will. It is a false abstraction of the Idea of God from the nature of things that is responsible for Kant's supposition that God is an outward agency working on a given material. The Idea of God includes the ideas of omnipresence, eternity and infinity, which forbid any attempt to exclude God's presence from the world. God can have meaning only when he comprehends the world in the very existence of His consciousness, which not only takes Him beyond even creatorship but makes Him the Absolute-Existence. To the Vedanta, the Absolute is the only reality, which includes and transcends every form of experience. This Absolute is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.

GEORGE WILHELM FRIEDRICH HEGEL

Hegel takes the philosophy of Kant to its fullest implications and gives us the grandest metaphysics that ever appeared on Western soil. Reason or Spirit becomes in Hegel the be-all and end-all of philosophy. The logical categories become the framework of reality itself. The logic of the mind is the same as the metaphysics of reality. The real is the rational and the rational is the real. Mind and Nature are not two distinct realms but phases of the evolution of the Absolute which manifests itself everywhere in the universe, in matter and mind, in the individual and society, in history, science, art, religion and philosophy, all at once. The Absolute is the Reality. Its essence is Reason. The universe is conceived as a logical or rational system, a process of the workings of the Absolute Reason. The Reason is the supreme. Everything is an embodiment of Reason. There is the Reason exhibited in every action, every movement, every thought; the life of the universe becomes the more rational, the more it unfolds in itself the Absolute Reason. In Logic, Nature and Spirit can be discovered the three stages of the evolution of the Absolute towards the realisation of Self-consciousness. The Absolute Spirit is the goal or the consummation of the activity of the Reason. All the parts of the universe are organically determined by the purpose of the whole which is the Absolute and which is logically prior to all the parts. No part has meaning or reality apart from its organic relation to the whole. Hegel's system is the famous logical or absolute idealism.

Kant made a metaphysics of reality an impossibility. Hegel makes it supreme above all things. For Hegel, to know the Reason is to know Reality. The laws of Reason are the laws of Reality. Hegel's Reason is in a process of evolution. Every higher stage in this evolution includes and transcends the lower, and thus becomes the purpose, intention, meaning and truth of the lower. The higher is the self-unfoldment or the self-realisation of the lower. In the higher is the real being of the lower made more explicit and conscious of its

being. Every stage in this rational evolution reflects a universal situation, every stage has in it elements which speak of the past and predict the future, for the Absolute is implicit in every stage. This process of the self-development of the Reason, Hegel calls the dialectic of the Reason.

Hegel observes that everywhere there is change in the universe. Nothing persists in the same condition for ever. Everything tends to and passes into something else. Every particular state is negated by factors contradicting it or rather raising it from its present being; and then there is another state in which this contradiction or negation is reconciled and made once again a consistent whole. This process of being, negation and reconciliation continues perpetually in all things in the universe, until the Absolute is realised in Self-consciousness. Hegel calls these three stages of affirmation, contradiction and fulfilment the thesis, antithesis and synthesis. The different parts of the Absolute Whole which act as the theses, antitheses and syntheses in evolution have no meaning in relation to themselves taken separately or independently. When viewed as discrete elements they appear as mere contradictions or discrepancies, but they all have a great meaning in relation to the Whole or the Absolute in which they seek their fulfilment and being, and the dialectical process is the way in which all things proceed necessarily towards this realisation of Self in the Absolute. In every stage of this development the materiality, mechanism, inertness and rigidity of things get transcended and the entire nature engages itself in disclosing its essential immortal being in Absolute-Consciousness. But Hegel makes a remark that the Absolute realised in the end as a result of evolution is not as such the complete whole; the Absolute*, together with* the process of evolution constitutes the complete whole. Here is a snag in his philosophy.

Hegel makes Nature or the universe necessary for the Absolute. But the tendency seen in his universe to overcome materiality and put on immortality in Self-consciousness

proves that materiality is not real, that ultimately the real is consciousness, that consciousness is the only reality, and that Nature which is another name for the externalised existence of material bodies is only an appearance which is gradually transcended at every stage, till at last the Absolute consciousness is realised. Thus the material universe loses its meaning in the Absolute, and so it is an indefensible position to say that the universe is necessary for the Absolute to give the latter its completeness or perfection. If by this necessity for the universe Hegel means that it is necessary for the evolutionary process, he ought to have said that it is necessary for the purpose of relative evolution and not for the Absolute which transcends the relative.

Another error of his is to have conceived the Absolute itself as subject to evolution or change, for an Absolute that has internal or external changes would become perishable. Evolution stops at the realisation of the supreme Self-consciousness in the Absolute, for that is the final goal of all motion and action, physical or mental. It is illogical to say that the perfection of the Absolute depends even in part on the existence of the universe, for the universe loses itself in the being of consciousness the moment the Absolute is realised. If there is a universe different from the Absolute, the Absolute is contradicted and it cannot even be. If the universe is non-different from the Absolute, the question of a necessity for the universe does not arise, for then the Absolute alone is. The Absolute is not something that is realised in the future by the dialectical process; it is eternally present at every stage of the process, though it requires to be realised in Self-consciousness attainable through such a process. Hegel fears that the Absolute would be rendered an abstract nothingness if it is divested of the universe. This fear is due to his false notion of concreteness derived from the unconscious belief that substantiality and reality mean some kind of solidity or tangibility which belief is an unfortunate lingering of the irrational instinct that affirms the authenticity of the deliverances of the senses. The Absolute is

the being of the universe too, and the universe would become non-existent if it is to be deprived of the reality of the Absolute. Evolution is a phenomenal process which cannot be stretched to the constitution of reality. If the Absolute is to be the sole reality, its being should be unconditioned and should consist in non-relative, intuitive experience, which also means that it should be without any change or modification in its being, that it should not stand in need of anything from outside, should not involve internal development or evolution. It should in a way be undifferentiated, but not a bare abstraction devoid of content. All content is transformed and ennobled in the Absolute, and its existence is identical with its content. It is existence, content, consciousness, freedom, infinity, eternity, all at once and in one. Human reason cannot comprehend it, it is known in superrational intuition or Self-realisation. The absoluteness of the Absolute implies also that its existence does not consist of plural entities or moments, that it is secondless, non-objective, through and through.

Hegel's difficulties are mostly due to his confusing the categories of the human reason with the Absolute consciousness. As we have already observed, the logic of the human reason is far from being identical with the constitution of Reality. The human reason is discursive, dividing subject and object, proceeding in a mathematical fashion, impossible without the concepts of space, time and causation. Kant was right when he said that human understanding is bound to the phenomenal categories and cannot correspond to reality as such. Hegel is right in holding that the Absolute Reason or consciousness is the essence of reality, but he is wrong in stretching the laws of human reason or intellect to the realm of reality. The logic of the ordinary human reason is not the metaphysics of reality; metaphysics is a study of the wider universal implications of human experience. Hegel's attachment to the powers of human reason is too strong to allow him to concede any superlogical intuition. This is why he thinks that pure being

is equal to nothing, that reality is a becoming or a synthesis of being and nothing, that a non-dual, undifferentiated Absolute is inconceivable, that the Absolute is dynamic change and process, in a state of flux or evolution, and that there is development in the Absolute Reason. Hegel attributes to the Absolute what he observes in Nature through his human sense and reason, and then makes a categorical declaration that a logical necessity is the same as metaphysical verity. Logic could become metaphysics if we understand by logic the laws of the deeper implications of human experience, the laws either of the governing principles of the cosmic Reason which may be said to represent the true plan of the Absolute, or of the eternal Nature of the Absolute itself. Phenomenal evolution can be attributed to the cosmic Reason, but not to the Absolute. But Hegel does not make any such reserve in his concept of evolution, and sees in Reality itself the dynamic changes of evolution, an empty abstraction when Nature is removed from experience, and causation even in the essential constitution of Reality. All these are imperfect notions of the human reason working in relation to the phenomenal Nature, but not attributable to the perfection of the Absolute. Change is a symptom of want, an imperfection, which we cannot ascribe to the self-complete Absolute. Hegel's logic is the logic of the phenomenal reason, and if he is to stick to his logic in constructing metaphysics, even supposing, as he says, that this logic is super-individual, he would only be giving us a metaphysics of the cosmic Reason, and not of the Absolute. Hegel never became conscious that there can be a Consciousness more real and unifying than the phenomenal reason, whose implications take evolution to the cosmic Reason, and boldly began to build a metaphysics with the material made available by sense-experience and the logical categories. Though his Reason is made the essence of Reality transcending sense-experience, this is done only after material is already drawn from sense and understanding. Hegel's system can become a monument of the genius to

which reason can ever rise, if only his prejudice in favour of the phenomenal functions of reason is removed from his metaphysics of Reality. Yes; the real is the rational and the rational is the real, provided we, even when raising the Real above sense-experience, do not introduce the relative categories of the understanding, with its concomitant notions of duality, plurality and change, to the essence of the Real, and understand by the Reason and the Real the immutable universal Consciousness implied in all experience. Otherwise, the Real has to be limited to the cosmic Reason. The Absolute is complete even without any reference to evolution or development, for the latter is meaningful only in phenomenal perception and not in the experience of eternal completeness. If Hegel would restrict his dialectical process to the work of the cosmic Reason in the relative universe, and not take it to the Absolute itself, his system would join hands with the Vedanta.

In agreement with the Vedanta, Hegel considers the Absolute to be the truth of all things. All things have their being in the Absolute. There is only one Consciousness everywhere, the self-accomplished Absolute, which, however, when it is equated with Ultimate Reality, cannot fit in with Hegel's view that the Absolute has to undergo dialectical process in order to complete itself in the Self-consciousness of Spirit. The opinion that a reader of Hegel is likely to form in his mind is that his Absolute is not yet ready and that it has to be manufactured in the future by the evolutionary process of the dialectic of Reason. But Hegel does not permit one to form this opinion consistently, for he asserts that the Absolute is implicit in all the stages of the process and that it is the sole eternal Reality. This, again, would make one feel that his Absolute is an immutable being, not subject to change. Can we then say that the dialectical process is the passage of the relative individual reason functioning in an organic relation to the phenomenal universe towards a gradual unfoldment within itself of the transcendent Absolute which is eternally present in the

deepest recesses of its consciousness? May evolution be discoverable only in the Cosmic Reason and not in its essence which is the Absolute? Then cosmic evolution would be possible and necessary, and yet it would not affect the Absolute. But Hegel does not give us the freedom to understand him in this way; he insists that Reality is a becoming, that it is a logical process of dynamic developing evolution. We thus notice two contradictory views which are held by Hegel: on one side he says that there is change and development, evolution or becoming in the Reality. This is clearly an unwarranted transference of relative phenomena experienced by the individual reason to the trans-empirical Absolute. On the other side, he asks us not to forget that his Reason is not any individual state, not the differentiated ideas of the human being, but that it is a universal rational necessity implied in all thoughts, which is transcendental, metaphysical and which has to be realised in Self-consciousness. Here Hegel confuses between the functions of the individual reason moving in adaptation to the evolutionary phenomena of Nature and the Absolute Consciousness which is the true goal of his philosophy.

There are, however, certain features in Hegel's philosophy which are suggestive of great meaning and for which he deserves the credit that is due to a great philosopher. One of such features is his logical development of the Absolute Idea and carrying it through Nature, to consummate it in the Absolute Spirit, though he did not work out this theory perfectly. His dialectic continues till the Absolute Idea realises itself in the Absolute Spirit. It is possible for us to do proper justice to Hegel by confining his dynamic change, development or evolution to the Absolute Idea and Nature, to the universal subject and the universal object, *until* they reach their perfection in the Absolute Spirit, without attributing evolutionary development to this Spirit itself, *provided* we bring about a radical change and rectification in Hegel's notion of the Spirit. For Hegel's Absolute Spirit, though it is said to be the self-fulfilment of

the Absolute Idea through Nature, is made to seek its perfect expression in art, religion and philosophy. One would have expected Hegel to take the Idea through Nature and raise it to the Transcendent Self-consciousness in the Spirit, in the manner in which the Ishvara of the Advaita is raised to the Consciousness of Brahman. But Hegel appears to bring down the Absolute to the relative realm of the individuals when he makes it realise itself in art, religion and philosophy, so that there is the dialectic even in the pure Spirit. This would obviously be a travestied completion of his great philosophy. The Absolute Idea, again, should be carefully freed from individual psychological functions or the logical categories of human thought, and made the cosmic Reason of the Ishvara of the Vedanta. If we bring about this change in our concept, and forget Hegel's own description of the Absolute Spirit and understand this Spirit in the sense of the Brahman of the Vedanta, we would be able to discover the Ishvara of the Vedanta in his Absolute Idea and the body of Ishvara in his Nature. The Absolute Spirit would then be Brahman. Hegel's contention that God is no God without the universe, that God cannot cease to be manifesting himself as the universe, and that he cannot be without recognising himself in the universe which is his universal object and yet non-different from him can be meaningful only when this God is understood in the sense of Ishvara, who too, is no Ishvara without the universe, who cannot ever cease from appearing as the universe, and who cannot be without recognising himself in the universe which is his universal object and which is non-different from him. Change and evolution are to be seen in Ishvara and in his cosmic body, which two are organically related to each other and which are the prototype of all the continuously evolving individuals here. As the embodiment of all individuals Ishvara has plurality in him, though these plural elements are inseparable parts of the organism of his body. So have change and evolution to be characteristics of Hegel's Absolute Reason as the Idea, which has Nature as its universal body, the two being organically related to each

other, and which, as the embodiment of all the relative moments in the dialectical process, is constituted of a plurality of such moments, which are bound to it organically by *internal relations*. Both for Ishvara and the Absolute Idea of Hegel the universal body is not outside as a material existence but is one with knowledge or Reason. All that Hegel has said in regard to the Absolute Idea would then apply to Ishvara and His Nature as the body of the Idea would correspond to the *Jagat* which is the body of Ishvara. Nature and history become the stages of the evolution of the Idea into Self-consciousness in the Spirit. But we have to keep the Absolute Spirit apart, unaffected by change, as we do Brahman. This, however, is only a suggestion, and it should not be forgotten that Hegel does not deal with his system in this way.

Another interesting feature in the philosophy of Hegel is his development of the theory of *internal relations*. The parts of the Absolute are all internally related to it, and this relation they bear even among themselves. God is a logical system of relations. The whole and the part are related to each other organically. A part is what it is because of its unique relation to the whole, and without this relation the part is nothing; it can have neither meaning nor being. Every part is sustained by every other part in a manner that Whitehead is to describe in his theory of organism. Every part is dependent on every other part, and determines it. The whole always exceeds the mathematical sum of its parts; the infinite is not merely an aggregate of finites. The parts are not externally related in a way that one does not determine the other, but are internally related so that any change in any part will affect the whole. The whole ceases to be what it is now when there is modification of condition in any part. Every change is a universal change; there is no such thing as change in a particular part alone. Every situation anywhere mirrors a universal situation. The nature and purpose of the whole is the sole factor that determines what a part is at any given moment. The whole is prior to the parts and is the

reality of the parts. The Absolute is such a whole and the individuals in the universe are such parts of it, bearing such relations to it. A complete knowledge of any part involves a knowledge of the whole, for the true essence of the part is in the whole. So it is impossible to have a real knowledge of anything in the universe without a knowledge of the Absolute. The theory of internal relations applies to Ishvara, but not to Brahman. And Hegel ought to confine all relations to the Absolute that is conceived in relation to the phenomenal universe, and not to the Absolute *as such* in its pure essence. The Vedanta holds that attainment of perfect knowledge is impossible as long as one is bound to the empirical universe, and says that 'by knowing *That,* all things become known', in an instantaneous, indivisible, eternal *Now* and in infinite *Here.*

Hegel's Absolute becomes a relative conceptual process and not an immutable consciousness, because the latter is realised only in non-mediate intuition which, for Hegel, is not the genuine way of knowing. He holds that Reality cannot be known in any mystic intuition, but is known only in thought—Reason. He thinks that Reality cannot be pure being and that any attempt for such an intuition of it would not give us anything more than this abstract being. We find in philosophers like Shankara and Swami Sivananda an insistence that the findings of the intellect have to be judged by the revelations of intuition, but Hegel would have it that the claims of any intuition should be made concrete and real by logical thought. Hegel dissects experience into abstract intuition and concrete reasoning and thinks that intuition is something cut off from the rational process. The result is that he produces a system of philosophy in which Reality becomes a changing process, thus denying its own existence as Reality.

Intuition is a faculty of knowing which is not infra-intellectual but super-intellectual. It is the integral realisation of the true essence of things. The knower enters the very

spirit or being of the knowable object and knows it in his own being and consciousness in an instantaneous wholeness which the intellect cannot understand. Intellect is transfigured and raised in intuition, not negated or abandoned. Hegel's extreme views on the value of rationality are due to an incapacity in him to comprehend the nature of a super-rational means of knowing. Hegel's own theory that the whole is prior to the parts and that it determines the parts gets defeated by his inductive system of the dialectical process which constructs a general Absolute from the particular phases observed in life through the phenomenal reason. Intuition gives us the whole at once, as prior to the appearance of the particulars, while intellect, which is the tool of Hegel, splits up Reality into parts and infers the former from the latter. Induction can give us only probabilities and not self-evident truths. How, then, did Hegel become confident of the existence of a trans-empirical Absolute which is unattainable by induction and which logically precedes the various knowable particulars in the world? It is impossible to get an Idea of the Absolute by dovetailing particulars through conceptual reasoning. The fact is that Hegel has already in his mind an Idea of the Absolute even prior to his commencing the exposition of the dialectical process which is only a later instrument employed to justify the Idea which was in him intuitively. Nothing but a mystical moment experienced could have been responsible for the rise of an Idea of the Absolute in Hegel's mind. But this Idea was afterwards clouded by an exaggerated importance given to conceptual thought, and so what Hegel discovered is not the eternal Reality of intuition but a phenomenal appearance of it which makes it inseparable from what we observe in Nature through our imperfect means of the conceptual categories. True philosophy is a rational declaration of intuitional experience, and not a conceptual grouping of externally observed phenomena. Intuition is the immediate knowing by the total being of the Self, while intellect is only an understanding of a few

empirical parts. Hegel would have become one of the greatest expounders of the Vedanta, if only he could recognise the significance of intuition, whereby we know the Absolute as it is, and not as it merely appears to us.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

If Hegel is the philosopher of the Intellect, Schopenhauer is the philosopher of the Will. He takes his start from Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and holds that the thing-in-itself which for Kant was an unknowable noumenon is knowable directly in one's own self as volitional activity. The Will is the thing-in-itself. Schopenhauer's Will is not the individual psychological will, but a universal metaphysical principle, spaceless and timeless and uncaused, even as Hegel's Reason, as he held, is not merely an individual function. The Will, says Schopenhauer, manifests itself in the individual as impulse, instinct and craving. The Will, again, it is that appears as consciousness and body. Thus the true self of man is identified with the Will.

Everything in the world, too, becomes an expression of the Will. The world is Will and Idea and has no independent material existence. The Will is above the Idea and is the only reality. The Will is blind, unconscious, and the Idea which is conscious is only its appearance in the intellect. We see nothing anywhere except the Will and the body which is the expression of the Will. Right from unconscious matter up to the self-conscious man the Will alone reigns supreme. It appears unconscious in something and conscious in another. It is all strife, activity, yearning that we observe everywhere. Desire is the cause of all things. With the Yogavasishtha, Schopenhauer would say that there is the eye because there is desire to see, there is the ear because there is desire to hear. The body and bodily functions are the expression of the Will. The digestive organs are the objectifications of hunger, the feet of the desire for movement, the brain of the desire for knowledge. There can be no body, and no world, without the Will. Longing, craving, or function, determines the nature of being, of the kind of organisation which becomes the body of the Will. The Will-to-live is the root of all things. It is the cause of struggle, suffering, pain. The Will is the great evil that accounts for the misery of all beings.

Schopenhauer’s concept of the Will is fascinating. The Will is the Reality and it is blind urge. Consciousness or intelligence is its phenomenal effect made manifest in higher organisms in order to pave the way for the work of the Will in the world. For Schopenhauer intelligence is not the essential nature of the self. It is only a production of the brain created by the Will for its own purposes. Consciousness is an appearance, Will the Reality which is the immortal force that never dies with the death of individuals, never perishes through change. It may manifest itself in a mortal shape as individuals, but it cannot itself cease to be. The Will is imperishable being.

Schopenhauer’s Will is more like the *mula-prakriti* of the Vedanta, which is essentially unconscious activity, rather than Reality whose essential nature is consciousness. Individual consciousness which expresses itself in the intellect is defined by the constitution of *prakriti* whose representation is the intellect. Intellect is the medium through which intelligence becomes manifest. But, in the Vedanta, *prakriti* is not Reality, and consciousness is not the expression of *prakriti*. Consciousness is the essence of Reality which is beyond *prakriti*. But it is true that the intellectual intelligence in man is controlled by its unconscious Master, the *prakriti* with its primary modes of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Perhaps the Freudian psycho-analysts would be friendly with Schopenhauer as he would be an aid in demonstrating their theory of psychological determinism, that the conscious is always determined by the nature of the unconscious, and that free-will is an illusion produced by the false notion that the conscious is independent of the unconscious. Instinct, craving, urge, is at the root of even the operation of reason. We are here reminded of Bradley’s saying that metaphysics is the finding of bad reasons for what we believe upon instinct, and that to find these reasons, again, is no less an instinct. But the urge for knowledge is not an irrational blind force. The instinct that makes it impossible for us to desist from the noble enterprise of

metaphysics is a superrational aspiration which voices forth the longings of the infinite in us. Schopenhauer's blind Will cannot answer to this deepest truth in us, nor can the unconscious of Freud go beyond a mere sum of the unmanifested creative impressions and impulses left by our past conscious acts, since ages. Consciousness is not a by-product of the unconscious Will, any more than it is a secretion of the material brain.

Schopenhauer's theory that consciousness is only a mirror of the unconscious Will is, as it can be very easily shown, an untenable assumption. The arguments against materialism naturally level themselves against this view of Schopenhauer. How can consciousness be manifested by an unconscious principle unless it is hidden in the unconscious itself? If consciousness is latent in the unconscious, then the unconscious itself must be endowed with consciousness, though we may accept that this consciousness remains unmanifested in it. If consciousness is different from the unconscious, it is not even a manifestation of the unconscious, and in this position even the existence of the unconscious cannot be known for want of any relation between consciousness and the unconscious. We can as well say that the unconscious does not exist at all. If, on the other hand, consciousness and the unconscious are one in essence, the unconscious gets illuminated by consciousness and its essence becomes consciousness. Even on this supposition the unconscious ceases to be. If it is said that the unconscious alone is, and there is no such thing as consciousness, we say that, as in that case no one would know that there is the unconscious, there is no warrant for the supposition that the unconscious exists. Schopenhauer can convey to us no meaning by asking us to run away from Reality or to overcome Reality. Reality cannot be abandoned or destroyed or overcome; it is the Supreme Being which every one has to realise in one's own self. How can such a Reality be a blind Will, a body of craving that brings misery? Instead of asking us to rise from phenomena to Reality, he wants us to be rid of

Reality. Moreover, the real should necessarily be the good. It requires no argument to prove this, for the Real is naturally not different from one's own self. Have we to flee from our own selves? Has this teaching any sense?

Schopenhauer's Will, the evil principle, has to be considered a cosmic *conception* of the individual will which is characterised by the evil of craving. A cosmic being, by itself, cannot be evil, for no ethical or moral value, desire, pleasure or pain can be attributed to what is super-individual. Evil is meaningful only in the individual, not in Reality. We can accept the theory of a primordial unconscious cosmic existence, as the *prakriti* of the Vedanta, and a conscious Idea appearing in it, as Ishvara or Hiranyagarbha. But we cannot make even this conscious Idea an appearance of the unconscious, for consciousness cannot proceed from unconsciousness. We have to posit a Reality whose essential nature is consciousness and which manifests itself in the cosmic unconscious as the conscious Idea. Further, the evil has to be confined to the individual psychological will which is a spoilt child of the cosmic Will, and should not be taken to the cosmic Will itself which is a metaphysical principle transcending good and evil. Schopenhauer's advice that one should free oneself from the evil will amounts to nothing more than that one should transcend individual existence, and cannot mean that one should avoid Reality itself, which is an impossibility. He has made the mistake of objectifying the individual will in the cosmos and calling it a metaphysical Reality. Even if everyone's will is to be evil, it does not mean that the cosmic Will is evil, for even all individual wills put together cannot make the cosmic Will. The argument against Kant's supposition that the categories of the understanding, objectively present in the sense that they are in all men, determine the nature of perceived objects, applies also to Schopenhauer's belief that the evil will has a metaphysical existence. Will is not Reality; it is the dynamic executive power of consciousness, cosmically as well as individually. In

the cosmos it is free; in the individual it is bound and determined.

Schopenhauer's philosophy has, however, great value if only we would take it in its application to psychology, and not as a fully convincing system of metaphysics, not forgetting at the same time that while psychology is concerned with the behaviour and the functions of the individual mind, it is totally ignorant of the transcendental aspirations and the sublime conscious endeavours of the higher spiritual reason in man. Our want, says Schopenhauer, determines and is at the bottom of our reasonings. It is not because we reason that we want; reason is the servant of want. Want is considered to be the master of even the reason. We cannot influence people by appealing always to their understanding; understanding is dominated by volitional cravings. We have to appeal to the Will which is the seat of desire. Schopenhauer thinks that there is no use of reasoning and argumentation with people—they can never be persuaded or convinced by appeal to reason—they yield when the activities of their Will, their private cravings, their urges, their interests are appealed to. We forget what we merely understand; we remember what we desire. Reason or understanding is a mere tool in the hands of the cravings and fears of the Will. The Will-to-live, not the understanding, is the mainspring of all action. Schopenhauer would agree with us if we say that all life is a struggle for food, clothing, shelter, sex and protection from outside attack. Only we have to add, though Schopenhauer never seems to have had the patience to reflect over it, that there is another higher instinct, a secret aspiration in man which supersedes all the lower instincts, the aspiration for the wisdom of Truth, notwithstanding that this is rarely seen in most human beings.

Organic attraction and mechanical pull are both to Schopenhauer expressions of the Will-to-live. This Will tries falsely to overcome death by self-reproduction. This is why, says Schopenhauer, the sexual urge is so strong in all beings.

It is just another phase of the Will-to-live, the assertion of its immortality, its attempt to live eternally as an individual of the species. The instincts for self-preservation and self-reproduction are not different from each other. The latter is only the process of ensuring the existence of the former in the future, too. Hence there is only one instinct, the turbulent, unquenchable Will-to-live. The intellect has no power over this instinct. Schopenhauer makes the romances of love merely the subtle contrivances of the Will-to-live, the instruments used by it in its dark and wild operations to preserve itself. He concludes that sexual love brings misery to the individual because its aim is not the pleasure or the good of the individual but the continuation of the species, for which nature shrewdly covers the reason of the individual and induces it to lay faith in the illusion that this is for its own pleasure and good. Thus the attempt of the Will to immortalise itself ends in its defeat, for what is here immortalised is not the individual but the species. The individual has been cleverly deceived! Pleasure has no place in the process of the preservation of the species. Here Schopenhauer gives merely a psychological interpretation of the Will-to-live asserting itself as the Will-to-reproduce. Its metaphysical implications are to be discovered in the dialectical process of Hegel and the 'satisfaction' of 'actual entities' in the philosophy of Whitehead. The neutralisation of the thesis and the antithesis in the synthesis, which is the way in which all things create and recreate themselves and which Hegel employed to describe the integrating process of the higher evolution of the individuals towards the realisation of Self-consciousness in the Absolute applies distortedly in relative individuals, ignorant of any such higher purpose, to the reproduction of individualities. In Whitehead the Hegelian dialectic continues in an elaborate manner. The actual entities of Whitehead supply the data which are sought to be unified into the 'satisfaction' of the innate urge to create. An 'actual entity' is said to enjoy the process of creating itself out of its data, feels a 'satisfaction' in

its self-emergence. An 'actual entity' becomes a 'superject' when it emerges out of the pre-existing world of actual entities. The implied meaning of all this is that a creative urge is immanent in all things, which in its higher liberating archetypal existence becomes an integrating conscious march to the realisation of the Absolute, and in its lower binding reflected aspect in mortal individuals assumes the form of a blind seeking to perpetuate the species. Here the lower becomes a travesty of the higher. The Greek philosophers had evidently this in their minds when they held the extraordinary view that sexual love represents in the world of sense a shadow of Divine love. The Hindu ethics, too, regards marriage not as a contract of love, but as a sacrament, a devout union of souls for the fulfilment of a purpose higher than the mundane. It was not any element of passion but a dutiful surrender to law that determined the meaning of marriage in ancient Hindu society. It was a spiritual aim that directed the union of the sexes. A note, however, has to be added that all this is true metaphysically and in highly advanced societies, but the ordinary individual in the world of sense gets perpetually blindfolded and stupidly forgetting all spirituality in the nature of things, does not only fail to benefit by these higher implications, but heads towards a fall into the mire of bondage and grief due to its cravings. As a rule it has to be held that there is no possibility of discovering the spiritual in external objects as long as one is locked within the prison-house of a world of ignorance, desire and attachment. Schopenhauer gives the lower empirical side of the picture, and does not rise to these heights which we know the man of today is not endowed with the ability to understand. For Schopenhauer marriage is the disillusionment of love, a trick by which every one is made to fall a victim to the blind Will. The Will can be conquered, says Schopenhauer, by overcoming the Will-to-reproduce. The Will-to-reproduce is considered the greatest evil, for it seeks to perpetuate the misery of individual existence. Schopenhauer says that passions can be subdued

by the domination of knowledge over the Will. Most of our troubles would cease to be troubles if only they could be properly understood in relation to their causes. Self-control provides to man the greatest protection against all external compulsion and attack. True greatness is in self-mastery, not in victory over the worlds. The joy of the within is greater than the pleasure of the outside. To live in the self is to live in peace. The evil Will can be overcome by conscious contemplation on the truth of things. Schopenhauer even recommends the company of the wise and intimate relations with them as aids in this contemplation. Knowledge is the great purifier of the self of man. When the world is viewed not by sense but by knowledge, man is liberated from the evil and bondage of the Will. Knowledge takes us to the universal essence. How can this profound insight be consistent with the notion that consciousness, intelligence or knowledge is only a phenomenon, an appearance of the Will? How can knowledge give man freedom from the Will if it is only a creature projected by the Will? Further, when the Will is Reality and also blind and evil, there can be no such thing as freedom, for the ultimate aim of existence is to return to Reality, and so the eternal experience that we have to aspire for ought to be one of unconsciousness, evil. How can Nirvana from the Will or the attainment of happiness and peace be possible, which Schopenhauer so forcibly pleads for, if the Will is Reality and consciousness its effect? How could Schopenhauer give us a chaste philosophy through his intellect if the intellect is an appearance of the evil Will? Will not then his philosophy itself become a product of blind craving and evil? Schopenhauer gives evidence to a confused mind which longs for universal and eternal freedom in perfect knowledge, but which at the same time condemns this longing by denouncing Reality as a blind and evil Will. His resignation to asceticism which, he says, can destroy the Will and enable one to attain freedom shows that the Will is not Reality but a clinging to individual existence, and that Reality is freedom, happiness and peace. A recognition of the

limitations and sufferings, cravings and evils in the relative world ought to be no doubt the beginning of any true philosophy. But Schopenhauer commits himself many times to extreme statements which a sober mind will find difficult to appreciate fully. The limit is reached when Reality itself is jibed as evil. Such a theory is the result of an imperfect and one-sided view of life, though at times, side by side with an expression of prejudice and personal sentiment, he gives intimations of profound knowledge and a wisdom that cannot but win the admiration of the thinking world. Schopenhauer is no less a genius than either Kant or Hegel, but his genius often gets marred by certain immature conclusions, a defective metaphysics and an attempt to give the touch of wholeness to what is only one side of the nature of things. There is evil when craving rules our realm, but beyond all this is a goal which is unsurpassable splendour and bliss eternal and which we are bound to achieve. However, it has to be admitted, in the end, that Schopenhauer has done a great service to mankind by drawing its attention to the fact that life is not all roses, that there is a dark and bitter side of existence here, that there is ignorance, deception, suffering and pain, and that no philosophy which ignores this truism can ever hope to be complete.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

For Schopenhauer the Will-to-live is the all. But Nietzsche conceives the Will-to-power as the supreme. Both are philosophers of the Will; the former teaches a voluntaristic idealism, the latter a voluntaristic individualism. Nietzsche propounds the theory which holds that the instinct for the acquisition of power is the prime factor that motivates all the activities of life. The Will as the desire for power is the principle of Reality. Intellect, reason, knowledge are all instruments of this Will. Knowledge is a means to acquire power. We observe that everything in this world has a tendency to try to overcome others, to gain superiority over everyone else, to vanquish or rule the whole world of beings. The law that directs all activities in life is the law of power, the urge to excel all others in strength. This urge is universally present and its aim is the production of the superman, the master of all beings, who is above all others in power. This Will-to-power can achieve its purpose only by striving and suffering and an inevitable loss on the part of the weak. Life is meaningful only on account of struggle. War is good; peace is stagnation which is not worth desiring. War strengthens the race, peace weakens them. There is no universal truth, no unity, no oneness. All is difference, inequality, strife. Courage and strength are the greatest virtues; pity and compassion are bad, for they contradict the Will-to-power. Self-denial and asceticism, peace and happiness, non-resistance and equality are all oppositions to the primary instinct in life, the Will-to-power. Life is struggle for existence at its highest. The test of a man is energy and ability. The desire of the superman is to face danger, to encounter strife in order to be supreme himself.

Nietzsche's philosophy is that of human egoism, of the assertion of individuality which all great philosophers have advised us to overcome in order that we may become really great and blessed. Nietzsche's superman cannot acquire universal power unless he realises his universal existence. How can omnipotence and individual existence be

compatible with each other? Supreme power can only be in the infinite. Where, then, comes this boasted power? There is no true power when one is bound to temporal individuality. And when universal power is attained, there is a transcendence of individual existence, for then it gets identified with Reality which is infinite. Nietzsche's doctrine is obviously a proud affirmation of the principle of the 'struggle for Existence' and 'survival of the fittest'. Well; courage is good, bravery is laudable. But this should be an inner toughness born of the realisation of a superhuman ideal of divinity, or at least of a sincere aspiration for this realisation. Nietzsche's superman has nothing of the divine in him; he is a proud individual. Power without knowledge is a harmful weapon, and he who wields it shall be vanquished in the course of time. The humility of the saint is not a confession of weakness but an announcement of universal Self-experience. Brutality or boorishness cannot be called a virtue. That the weak may be subjugated by force is no teaching of wisdom. And after all, who can be contended to be weak, if everyone becomes a candidate for lordship with the power of the superman? Any transvaluation of values has to be in conformity with the deepest implications of the spiritual consciousness in man, and these implications stretch towards a oneness which is beyond individualism. Nietzsche would appear to be a protagonist in the drama of evil and vice if his craving for power is not submerged in the aspiration for higher spiritual knowledge and experience where power reaches its culmination. Knowledge is power. Power in conscious beings has to be defined as the force generated by inner illumination, by the direction of consciousness to Reality. Our power becomes great in proportion of our nearness to the Absolute.

Morality is not a weapon of the weak, as Nietzsche thinks. It is the precondition to self-control which paves the way for the knowledge that brings genuine power. That happiness is bad and peace undesirable, that war is preferable and strife indispensable is not the voice of a healthy mind. Nietzsche

has not in him the insight of a Hegel to discover the good, the reality and the power of the individual in wider fields of experience where all these get transmuted in self-transcendence; not even the honesty of a Schopenhauer to detect the evils of individual existence. The greatest men of all ages were not balloons swelling with the pride of strength, but tranquil contemplatives on the light that shines beyond the realm of struggle and pain. Worldly knowledge may be a tool for exercising power over others; but knowledge as such, the wisdom of the Truth behind which dance the marionettes of all things is not confined to any single individual; it hails supreme as the heart and soul of the entire power of the universe. Here knowledge and power are one, and the exercise of power is the exercise of knowledge, not on anyone else, for there is no other to such knowledge. Even in the relative plane where power can be exercised over others, it is knowledge that determines the intensity and extent of power. One cannot have power without knowledge with good as its result. The good is the true which is also wisdom and power.

The struggle for existence seen in individuals is no proof of the supremacy of the Will-to-power in them. Struggle for existence is first the expression of the Will-to-live, and includes, as Schopenhauer points out, the Will-to-reproduce. The struggle to live at one's highest, again, is not a craving for power, but an attempt at the acquisition of the greatest happiness possible. No one strives for power as an end in itself, and those who think they do are obviously working under the influence of a delusion. The aim that directs the longing for unlimited power is the acquisition of unlimited happiness; and happiness is identical with freedom. Freedom at its highest is not to be had in any state of individual existence. Individuality acts as a shackle that restricts the manifestation of the infinite power potential in man, and this infinite is the Absolute. Thus, all struggle for existence is ultimately a sign of the longing for the bliss of the Absolute, which, incidentally, is unsurpassed power, also. The survival

of the fittest is the success of those individuals in their environments, who approximate the more to the consciousness of the Absolute. The supreme value of life is in the realisation of this highest consciousness. Exploitation in itself is not the meaning of the struggle for existence. Hegel's dialectical process and Whitehead's ingressive evolution better explain the significance of what appears to us as struggle for existence and exploitation of others. All beings discover their meaning in realms of consciousness which gradually transcend individuality and point to the existence of the Absolute.

WILLIAM JAMES

William James, the great teacher of pragmatism in America, repudiates the claims of the logical reason in constructing systems of absolute monism, which, according to him, gives us an unmanageable 'block-universe' and set at nought moral responsibility, free-will, effort and aspiration, indeterminacy, want and struggle which are main characteristics and daily occurrences of life. The pragmatism of William James is a theory of the will which looks with disfavour on the intellectual philosophies which make a self-complete Absolute the entire reality. James complains that such rigoristic systems become deterministic in their nature and give no room for variety, novelty and personal effort. They contradict the practical realities of life, thus losing touch with experience and glorying in an airy abstraction. The test of truth, for James, is its practical consequences, the actual bearing it has on life. Nothing, according to James, can be accepted as true which does not stand this pragmatic test. Here the judge is not the reason but the will-to-believe which dominates all activity and experience. We cannot make truth an absolute principle or an end in itself, for such a rigid truth is nowhere seen to exist. Truth is a means to an end, an instrument for the fulfilment and satisfaction of the demands of the will-to-believe. There cannot be a universal truth, unchanging and eternal, beyond experience. What is true is what is believed to be true by men's temperaments and aptitudes. There is no objective truth independent of these individual considerations. People accept a theory not because of its logical soundness but its appeal to practical needs. Nothing is true that is not admitted by life. The meaning of life is its practical workability, and its aim is a consistency in what it believes, understands and does. Even knowledge cannot be an end in itself, for its value is dependent on its utility in the satisfaction of practical needs. Knowledge, then, is a means to an end. James goes counter to all monistic systems of idealism, holding that truth is the same as utility in empirical experience, and that the useful is the true. What we believe irresistibly is to be regarded as

truth. Even God has to satisfy the pragmatic test in order to be. Reality is not beyond phenomena or appearance; it is ever being created by our efforts.

James identifies the real with the experienced. But this experience is always pluralistic, empirical, and not monistic or absolutistic. He favours theism rather than absolutism, for theism can permit the existence of a plurality or beings together with a God whom they may worship objectively. James is an empiricist in that his will-to-believe is based on sense-perception and the experience of the multifarious world of disconnected individuals. His restricting himself to phenomenal experience makes him conceive of consciousness as a stream or a flux of states, which is not *being* but *change.* Consciousness is not a static existence but a system of relations, not independent of its contents. Even the soul is a totality of thought-relations, a process, not being. James is a thorough-going adherent to the belief in observed phenomena, who reminds us of Locke and Hume once again in a new setting.

James thinks that if we believe in an omniscient and omnipotent Absolute we will become mere puppets in the hands of an eternally determined Divine will and cannot do anything ourselves for our progress in the future. A deterministic system of absolutism leads us to fatalism, despair and surrender. All hope is abolished from our life. Absolutism defeats our aspirations, desires and longings, and disappoints us at every step by making us play-toys in the hands of the Absolute. Not only this; absolutism mocks at our practical experiences and posits facts which have no relation to life. We are asked to believe what we neither understand nor experience. Absolutistic metaphysics does not provide an object for our immediate faith and belief. James thinks that a philosophy that undermines the validity of our personal experiences cannot stand. So he offers a God of empirical belief, a finite God, not omniscient, not omnipotent, who exists in the midst of many individuals in a universe of real

disharmony and diversity. God is only a companion of man, not his eternal self. The existence of God is not organically related to the universe of experience, for the latter is a scene of opposition and struggle, while the former is a superior individual inhabiting perhaps transparent realms. There is no Absolute like that of Hegel, no system or consistency of the type required by a universe directed by a self-existent primal will. Truth is not unity but diversity, though sometimes James makes indistinct statements regarding the possibility of some unity which is higher than human experience. It is all freedom of action and not any determined necessity that shapes the destiny of mankind. God does not direct our actions, but we recognise in him an object for our undeniable beliefs and irrefutable experiences. To put James' position concisely, God exists because we need him to justify our experiences. What is real is faith and individual experience, and everything else is an accessory to it. In thinking that the universe is a field of adventure and unforeseen novelty and not a finished system of eternal completeness, James and Bergson are one.

James' complaint that absolutism gives no scope for freedom of will is not true. It allows freedom of action on the part of the individual as long as its consciousness functions in relation to a personal ego. But it disillusions man by pointing out that this individual free-will is only an empirical expression of the eternal law of the Absolute, and nothing truly independent. Man's free-will is a fact of experience, but it is not ultimately real except when it is consciously identified with the workings of the Absolute in the universe. Our efforts constitute the exercise of this free-will. There is moral responsibility as long as we are confined to individual consciousness and work with free-will. But we transcend all relative values in Self-realisation. What we call novelty as presented to our mind and the senses is an eternally existing fact in itself, which previously remained outside our experience but which has now become its content, not because we have created it at present while it did not exist

before, but because we are now in a newer stage of evolution which presents to us a different vista of reality and a different angle of vision from which we view reality. Our aspirations are the gradual reaches of our minds towards what is beyond individuality and they have a reality and a value as long as our individualities are realities to us. Every state of consciousness in which we happen to be at any given time appears to be real to us, though no state remains uncontradicted in a higher degree of reality. Indeterminacy is the result of limited observation; a deeper intuition into Reality reveals the eternal unity and harmony of the universe governed by an unchangeable law. But all things are undetermined to the senses, our untrustworthy servants. Our desires and wants do not disprove the existence of the Absolute or posit a real diversity, but only indicate that we have a longing to unite ourselves with it, this longing taking shape as an unwise search for happiness in sense-objects on account of a confused transference of values, which is a sign of imperfection and of a need to reach perfection. Our struggles in life are the blind movements of this want in a wrong direction. It gets consciously directed to its real goal in sincerely aspiring souls endowed with correct discrimination, and in wise philosophers and saints.

The practical reality to which James is so much addicted is not reality in itself but merely a network of the evidences of the senses. It is hard to understand why one should lay so much emphasis on the validity of sense-experience and deny the significance of the deliverances of the higher means of knowledge. The world of sense is constantly changing, and a changeful phenomenon cannot be equated with reality. There cannot even be the changing phenomena without some unchanging support for their appearance. To say that there is no reality beyond phenomena is as meaningless as to say that there can be locomotion without space or walking without a ground. That the world is a practical reality or *vyavaharika-satta* is accepted by the Vedanta, too. But this reality is an appearance of a higher order of unity which is

paramarthika-satta. The highest reality is Brahman, the Absolute Self, which is at once being and consciousness. This consciousness, again, is not a changing flux or a stream of relations. James is more a psychologist than a philosopher and so he is made to put his trust in the psychological functions and identify them with the deepest consciousness in us. The mental consciousness is no doubt a stream, a flow, a becoming; there is nothing of being in it. But we do not flow or move with our mental states or relations; we *know* that there are states and relations, changes and becomings. Knowledge of a stream cannot itself be a stream. That we observe the states of the relations and ideas of the mind shows that we exist as witnesses independent of these changes of the mind. The true self does not move; for, if it moves, there should be an another to know its movement, a third self to know this second self, and thus *ad infinitum*, so that knowledge of movement would become impossible.

Utility cannot become the test of truth. The ways of the individual are capricious, and do not by themselves set forth any definite standard of judgement. What is constantly in a state of change cannot be an ultimate truth, for all change points to something towards which it moves. If truth is based on mere belief or even on a *pragmatic consideration*, it will contradict itself every time our beliefs get disillusioned. Such a truth has no doubt a pragmatic value in the sense that even hallucinations have a value at the time of their being experienced. Even our dreams are real and satisfy the pragmatic test in their own realm. But in the end such truths get contradicted in a greater reality than themselves. If pragmatism holds that there is no such thing as error at all, and that every experience is real within its own field, we have to add that these experiences cannot be ultimately real, for the test of reality is non-contradiction. When we apply this test we find that the plurality of individuals, the finitude of God, and the ultimate validity of observed facts in empirical life vanish in an experience which transcends relative categories. If we are to confine ourselves every time

to the immediate presentations in sense-perception and mental operations, irrespective of their being dreams, errors of thought or defective revelations through the senses, we have to be for ever sceptics in regard to the nature of truth. That such a sceptic attitude is impossible on the very face of it is easy to understand. Ultimate truth is not a means to an end, but an end in itself, for we have no other desire than to be in possession of truth, and as truth, in the end, should be universal, an experience of it would be the same as being in communion with it. Knowledge is the essence of truth, and what applies to truth applies also to knowledge. We cannot create truth; we only get a gradual revelation of it in the different stages of the unfoldment of our consciousness. What is created is perishable and is not truth. Else, we could call every whim, fancy and illusion a truth. Truth has a self-certainty and finality which none of the human experiences in the sense-world can afford to possess. Belief is not truth, for our beliefs often deceive us. Only a higher faith rooted in an illumined conviction can correspond to truth. The truths of sensations as well as those of mathematics and logic—the two aspects of truth for the pragmatist—are comprehended in a higher and more inclusive experience which we term the Absolute.

The philosophy of the Absolute is not fatalistic. It gives the greatest hope and courage to man by asserting that his essence is an immortal omnipresent existence which is wisdom and truth, freedom and bliss. It does not deny free-will or effort as a practical means to this glorious experience. The highest effort consists in meditation on the Absolute. Effort, however, rises beyond itself when the goal is reached. Finitude, evil, duality, plurality, change, evolution are all true and have a meaning in the level of individual experience. But they are all sublimated and absorbed in the Universal Self. There are three degrees of reality, all to be accepted as valid while they are experienced—the apparent, the practical and the absolute—revealed respectively in hallucination, in

waking life, and in the supersensuous realisation of Eternal Being.

James, sometimes, seems to believe in a reality which is independent of human thinking, and like the absolute idealists makes its being consist in pure experience. Contrary to his fundamental view he speaks as though truth is discovered rather than created in the adventures of life's processes, and makes out that it is a unity as real as diversity and that experience is not confined to the diverse perceptions of the senses. These developments are definitely foreign to the main current of his thought which suggests that the conscious self is only a flow of ideas appearing successively and that an indivisible consciousness is never experienced. The idea of a real unity behind a real diversity can make no sense, for we are confronted with two realities each contending to be as universal as the other. Is James occasionally being dogged by a faint persistence of the unsurmountable feeling that there ought to be, after all, a ground for all phenomena, which is immediately battled with by his usual belief that plurality cannot be denied on account of its being the object of the empirical will-to-believe? Perhaps, yes. He admits an aboriginal stuff of experience which enters experience and has not yet become properly a part of conscious life, a subject without a disjoined predicate, a neutral limit of our mental functions. But, no. What we call a universe is for him a multi-verse, and his universe is only a *universe of discourse*. The real objective field of experience is pluralistic. The oneness that he is talking about is a collection of particulars, the concatenation of things in space and time, and the continuity in the operation of the laws of physics, like gravitation, light, heat, sound, magnetism and electricity, and the influence of one man on another, etc. James thinks that even this continuity is not really continuous; it is broken up into divided parts by the existence of opaque material bodies. James overlooks the fact that even the physical universe is a perfectly continuous field of force or energy and that even opaque bodies which, according to him, create plurality in

the supposed continuum are, as corroborated by the discoveries of modern physics, reducible to this common universal force or energy, and matter loses its matterness or its character of being an embodied substance when subjected to careful observation. We know how Whitehead surmounts all plurality and division, in his illuminating philosophy of organism. Even lines of physical influence cannot be explained without a basic unity which is coextensive with our own conscious indivisible Self. James tells us that truth is neither a presentation of reality nor a correspondence with it; it is a relation between our ideas and experiences, effected, changed and created by us. That relations between things are themselves matters of experience takes us forcibly to its deeper implication that there is a unity linking all things together and that experience ought to be an undivided whole of consciousness. There cannot be consciousness of the relation of things without a universal consciousness that holds them together and makes them intelligible. James thinks that truth is a normal functioning and a harmonious relation of ideas, even as health is a normal functioning and a balanced relation of the parts of the body. He forgets that health is the indication of the expression of a wholeness that we experience when the harmonious relations of the parts of the body reflect the indivisibility of the Self. James manages to maintain, however, that reality is a stream of perceptions and ideas together with the relations that obtain between these perceptions and ideas as connecting links, and that reality is created by us every moment. He does not stop to think that no relation of ideas within is possible without an indivisible Self, and that there can be no perceptions outside without an Absolute underlying all things related in knowledge.

HENRI BERGSON

Bergson, the philosopher of intuitionism and of creative evolution, conceives Reality as a vital impetus, an elan vital, whose essence is evolution and development. The elan vital is a growing and flowing process, not a static existence which admits of no change whatsoever. Logic and science, intellect and mechanism cannot fathom the depths of the vital impetus which is the basis of all life. There is change and evolution everywhere, nothing merely is. All existence is a flux of becoming, moving and growing, a succession of states which never rest where they are. The intellect works mechanistically and constructs rigid rules and systems which cannot accommodate the rolling evolution of Reality. There can be no enduring substance in the river of life. Everything is changing, goes beyond itself. We can never get immutable things anywhere in the universe. Even consciousness is not unchangeable. It is a living, moving, growing and evolving process. Consciousness is the essence of the elan vital which is the great Reality. It is impossible to know Reality through logic and science. It is known only in intuition which is a direct vision and experience transcending intellectual processes and scientific observations and reasonings. The *elan vital* is a creative spirit which defies the attempts of the mathematical manner of approaches to it, and demands a deeper sympathy and feeling which will enter into its very essence. In intuition we comprehend the truth of things as a whole, as a complete process of the dynamic life of the spiritual consciousness. Instinct is nearer to intuition than is intellect. Intuition is instinct evolved, ennobled and become disinterested and self-conscious. Instinct, when not directed to action, but centred in knowledge, becomes intuition. Intuition has nothing of the mechanistic and static operations of the logical and the scientific intellect. Intellect is the action of consciousness on dead matter, and so it cannot enter the spirit of life. Any true philosophy should, therefore, energise and transform the conclusion of the intellect with the immediate apprehensions of intuition. Reality has to be lived, not merely understood.

Bergson distinguishes between matter and consciousness. While matter is mechanical, consciousness is creative, organising newer and newer situations in the onward march of evolution which constructs wider fields of consciousness from the situations of the past. The creative consciousness is at every moment in a newer condition, and does not repeat its experiences unless, of course, there is a regression. Though it evolves thus, it does not consist of differentiated parts; it always retains its indivisible character. Consciousness is free and is not determined by any necessity, either of mechanism or of finalism. It is unrestricted in its evolutionary march. We see in Bergson a touch of the Sankhya when he makes matter an instrument for the evolutionary activities of consciousness, though conscious- ness in the Sankhya never changes or evolves *in itself*. Bergson's consciousness and matter ought really to be conceived as expressions of a deeper impulse in which both have their common ground. But he generally maintains a dualism of matter and consciousness, though very rarely he gives a hint to this monism. Consciousness, he says, grows by drawing material from within itself and not from outside. Matter acts as a resisting force as well as an instrument in rousing the activities of the evolving consciousness. Matter thus provides an opportunity to put to proof the force of consciousness and stimulate its efforts towards further enrichment of itself in self-evolution. Every succeeding stage in evolution is a transcendence of the past, and not a loss of it. Consciousness remains undivided in spite of its change and growth. Bergson conceives Reality as consciousness which is endless duration, Time, becoming and change. God and life are one.

The God of Bergson is a finite, limited movement, ignorant of its future, not omniscient, not omnipotent, always hampered by the presence of matter, struggling against odds, finding with difficulty its next step in the darkness of what is yet to come to it as experience. Bergson's God is not yet born; he is trying to create himself. Who created his future fields of

experience, who gives him the impetus to move forward, and from where does he acquire knowledge and consciousness in the future? Where is freedom for consciousness if it is its necessary impulse to act, incapable of check, and dragging everything forward by its impetuous pull? Is not consciousness, then, the tool of an irresistible urge? What is this pull, this urge? Why should it be there at all? How can we say that Bergson is wiser than the great Spinoza who said that even a piece of stone, if it were endowed with a mind, would think that it is freely moving upward when it is really thrown by us into space? What does freedom mean if it is the nature of evolution not to cease and to struggle and again struggle, knowing not where to move? Freedom is always directed by a conscious desirable end, and when such an end is absent, freedom becomes a myth; there remains merely a groping of the impulse to urge itself forward to a destination which is not known. No one knows the purpose of Bergson's evolution. It has no purpose; that is all. The God of Bergson does not appear to be very different from the individuals on earth, who too struggle but know not for what, who too are not omniscient, not omnipotent, and are obstructed from all sides by external forces, who too are suffering through an inevitable strife throughout their life. A God who is constantly dying in the process of becoming is no God. And yet this seems to be Bergson's conception of God. Bergson does not notice that even the concept of change is impossible without an unchanging Reality underlying all change. Who is it that knows that there is change? How does Bergson know that there is ceaseless change, if he himself is moving on, never existing at any moment but only passing away incessantly? How can there be movement alone without something that moves? Who is it that evolves? Certainly, it cannot be evolution itself that evolves, nor is it change that undergoes change. Something ever-enduring, some pure being different from the process of change ought to be admitted in order that we may accept the validity of change and be aware of its existence. Conscious- ness cannot change

or evolve; for it is consciousness that knows the fact of change and evolution. Consciousness is not created, but only unveiled; it is eternal being, not becoming. Becoming is the outer crust and the relative object of being. We cannot say that there is an evolution of consciousness *as such,* for this contradicts the glaring fact that there cannot be a consciousness of evolution without a consciousness that does not evolve. What evolves is mind, not consciousness which is above and behind the mind. God does not create himself, for he is eternal existence. The fields of experience that are open to consciousness in the future stages of evolution are comprehended in this eternal, unchanging experience of God-Being; else there could be no evolution. How can a forward or upward motion of ours be possible if there is nothing ahead of us or above us? All evolution is within God who is at once omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. It is not God that evolves, but the individual and the phenomenal Nature. The Reality behind the *elan vital* is God whose essence is consciousness. The *elan vital* itself cannot be God, for it never is, it ever becomes.

There is change and evolution on account of a longing inherent in all individuals to attain their perfection in God. God is the Absolute in relation to the universe. Evolution has an end, a final aim, an eternal purpose towards which everything moves systematically and not blindly or gropingly, and by which it is directed with omniscience. This aim is the Absolute. There is universal evolution because the Absolute is universal being. It has to be realised universally, infinitely, eternally in the consciousness of pure being. The Absolute impels all individuals to evolve, internally as well as externally, for it is inside as well as outside. This impulsion is an inward necessity and not an outward compulsion in the sense that even the outside is an inside in the Absolute, for it is infinite being. What we call an outward universe is really an inward being in eternal consciousness.

Knowledge and consciousness are acquired in the future through evolution on account of the presence of omniscience and eternal wisdom in the deep recesses of our own being, which we are only unfolding in the process of evolution. Knowledge is not created or acquired in the future; it is an eternal presence in us, which merely gets realised in the course of time. The vital impetus of Bergson is only the external phenomenon of the process of the return of the individual to the Absolute. The inward meaning of it is the necessity of an immutable consciousness which transcends even the *elan vital*. The *elan vital* is only the biological impulse of growth and the psychological phenomenon of mind which Bergson confuses with Reality. It is true that there is evolution in body and mind, and in Nature as observed by the evolving individual; so far we have to pay credit to Bergson. But it contradicts all sense to say that Reality is moving, changing and evolving. Bergson's evolution is an *open* march of the life-force without an end or a purpose, which shows signs of a wild running amuck, as it were, of the hungry consciousness which does not know what food it is in need of. Bergson is wrongly identifying the unchanging Reality with phenomenal life-force and mind which are subject to change and evolution in time. It is this false view that makes him think that the aim of evolution is in every immediately succeeding stage, and not in any eternally fixed being. It is not true that even God cannot preordain the goal of evolution. There is a purpose which determines the kinds of organisation which a living being is to put on in the different stages of its evolution. Else, why should a particular organisation follow from the present one? All urge, all movement, the *elan vital* itself, is a yearning to realise God who is absolute consciousness in essence. This is the final directing goal of evolution. Here evolution stops. Bergson needs to be corrected.

The errors, bunglings and apparent regressions observed in life do not prove that evolution is not directed by a final aim and that it is all new invention at every succeeding stage

of evolution. The errors are the defects of the mind, potential or actual, which on account of a want of manifestation of a sufficient degree of intelligence suffers in life and learns by experience from within and without. It is not intelligence or consciousness that commits mistakes, but the psychological functions in the individual. They go wrong in their estimation of the true values of life. Discord and disharmony in Nature are the result of a partial observation of it by the individual. To know the harmonious workings of Nature, we have to partake of the universal being of Nature in our experience and not stand outside in space and time as disconnected witnesses. To know is to be, and not merely to look at and observe. The universe is a perfect harmony of forces. The ignorant evolving individuals cannot realise this fact as long as they remain individuals and do not see with the eye of spiritual intuition.

Bergson's intuition is not so deep as the intuition of the Vedanta. His 'sympathy' or entering the spirit of life seems to be an introspective intuition of the flow of the psychological consciousness and not an identification of the highest consciousness with pure being. The intuition of the Vedanta is a faculty of omniscience which comprehends the Absolute. Bergson has no possibilities of omniscience, no omniscient being exists for him. Even the *elan vital* is not omniscient. Further, he makes a sharp distinction between intellect and intuition. If instinct become self-conscious and ennobled can be identified with intuition, intellect too can become intuition when it is divested of its space-time relations. Intellect reveals a wider Reality than instinct, though it is handicapped by attachment to mathematical and logical ways of thinking from which instinct is free. But it is to be noted that only those endowed with intelligence can endeavour to reach intuition; the instinctive animal cannot do so. Intellect is the transition from instinct to intuition, and so it cannot be rejected as totally useless in one's spiritual advancement. The defect of instinct is that it is blind; that of intellect is that it is discursive. The value of intuition is in its

integral illumination of total being, quite different from and superior to the partial views provided by the intellect. Instinct and intellect are stages in the advance of consciousness towards intuition.

Matter and consciousness are not, as Bergson supposes, different from each other metaphysically. The difficulty is that Bergson's consciousness is the principle of the psychological functions, and naturally matter which is presented as the body of the cosmos should be independent of these functions. For no individual can create matter outside or identify his mind with it. Yet, Bergson speaks of consciousness as a metaphysical principle, the essence of the *elan vital*, and sets it against matter which is an obstructing as well as a helping medium in the evolution of consciousness. Under these circumstances, it is unwarranted to identify this changing and moving life-impulse with Reality. It requires a profound observation and reflection to recognise that matter and consciousness are not really hostile elements, that they appear as the external object and the internal subject respectively when the latter is confined to individual psychological functioning, and that ultimately they form the two phases in which the Absolute manifests itself as the universe. The existence of matter cannot be known unless there is a relation between matter and consciousness. The admission of such a relation would be to accept a unitary being underlying the two. Matter to Bergson appears as an entity second to consciousness because he is unwillingly identifying Reality with subjective mind, though he thinks that it is true objectively also, merely because it is seen working in everyone outside. It has been already pointed out that metaphysical Reality is not what is merely subjectively felt, though it may be felt thus by all individuals. Reality has a non-relative existence transcending subjectivity. Bergson's consciousness evolves because it is the individual mind moving with the operations of matter in a world of space and time. Evolution is impossible without space-time relations, for evolution is causation, whether we

conceive it as linear or organic. And space and time are phenomenal forms, they cannot be equated with Reality. Bergson unnecessarily emphasises the importance of time and makes it non-spatial, calling it an eternal duration which he identifies with Reality. It is impossible to conceive of time without space, and time does not cease to be a relative phenomenon merely because another word, viz., duration, is substituted for it. Space and time constitute a single continuum, and there can be no such thing as duration without time. Bergson thinks that there can be absence in space and yet there can be movement in time. This is a dogmatic assertion which cannot bear the test of experience, reason or observation. There cannot be succession or duration without space. Time cannot become Reality, for it has no existence independent of spatial and causal relations. Nor can it be said that causal change itself is Reality, for all change implies a changeless being as its ground.

Our steps in evolution are not completely free movements. We seem to have freedom because we work with our personal egos. If Reality is the Absolute, freedom can be only in a gradual approximation to it of the consciousness with which we work. Free-will is not opposed to determinism; it is the eternal universal law operating through a conscious individual ego that is called free-will. We are determined as individuals working independently with our personalities, but free as participators in the scheme of a cosmic consciousness. Our freedom is in proportion to our nearness to the Absolute. We are not really free until our consciousness is installed in the Absolute.

SAMUEL ALEXANDER

Samuel Alexander holds that Space-Time constitutes the primordial reality from which everything evolves and of which everything is formed. The universe is not at rest, it is changing and evolving within Space-Time. In this universe of motion and change, order and regularity are brought about by the different categories which characterise all things and which are universal and necessary. Motion is the most important of these categories and in it all others—existence, universality, relation, order, substance, causality, etc.—are implied. The categories of Alexander are not the laws of the knowing mind alone, but belong to the constitution of all things objectively. However, qualities can be observed in things which cannot be directly deduced from space, time and the categories and which appear at different levels of evolution. Every succeeding stage of evolution brings forward an entirely new property, not abolishing however the qualities of the preceding stages. From matter and motion all things, even minds, evolve in a unique way at different stages, though this uniqueness distinguishes them from the properties of matter and motion. The qualities of the lower level are retained but new ones which did not exist previously are added in the higher levels. This is the theory of emergent evolution.

For Alexander the lowest and primordial level is Space-Time with the categories which forms the origin of all things. These are the necessary conditions of all knowledge, and in a sense *a priori*. Then emerge from this root the primary qualities (size, shape etc. of things), the secondary qualities (colour, sound, etc.), life (in its lower forms), mind (intellect) and Deity (Spirit) which appear successively with the qualities of the preceding stages but with entirely new ones in addition. Deity has not yet been evolved. We are still in the stage of mind. In one sense every succeeding stage is the Deity of the lower. When the Deity above the level of the mind emerges in the future there will be the prospect of the emergence of a still higher Deity. But we have no knowledge

at present of the nature of levels higher than ours. Once a thing emerges we can say what conditions are necessary for its emergence, and that every time such conditions are provided such things will emerge. So, Alexander's theory is one of determinism regarding the present and past, and indeterminism regarding the future.

There is no Deity existing prior to evolution and causing evolution at its will. Deity is not ready yet, it is still in the process of making. The whole universe is now striving to evolve Deity. Deity is neither the ground nor the cause of universe. The origin of all things, even of Deity, is Space-Time with the categories. It is clear then that, according to Alexander, Space-Time has no creator, it is self-existent and is the cause of all other things which emerge from it. The God of religion is the whole universe thirsting for the evolution of Deity. Religious feelings and experiences are the action on our minds and bodies of the universe pressing forward towards Deity. Deity is not responsible for anything in the universe, for it is not yet born. There seems to be an endless evolution in inexhaustible time, and Deity itself is a creature of time.

Alexander's system is seriously defective. Space-Time is not a self-existent continuum independent of all else but is relative to the condition and the position of its observers and reduces itself on ultimate analysis to simpler elements. Much light has been thrown on the nature of space, time and the categories, of matter, force and gravitation, after the advent of great scientists like Einstein, Jeans, Eddington, and others. All things are reducible to an indeterminable energy, and this energy becomes a mode of Space-Time. Space-Time is not absolute but relative and gets lost, in the end, in symbols and mathematical formulae, for Space-Time as Alexander understands it is incomprehensible without matter and motion. It becomes an abstract assumption made to account for concrete reality. Its existence hinges on finite bodies and is inextricable from their existence. Eddington had the

courage to declare that the universe is ultimately coextensive with an omnipresent consciousness and that its stuff is this consciousness. Such a consciousness is not an emergent product of Space-Time, but is what determines even the existence of the Space-Time form. Though Space-Time is the necessary condition of all relative knowledge, it cannot determine the nature of Reality or be itself Reality.

That absolutely new qualities emerge in the different stages of evolution cannot be accepted. Where were the qualities before they were evolved? Who brought them about or made their existence possible? Nothing can emerge from nothing. The effect should be potential in the cause; else the effect cannot be. If consciousness is a by-product of Space-Time, it ought to have been inherent in Space-Time, which, then, would assume a spiritual character, and all things would be configurations of the universal consciousness. Matter, primary qualities, secondary qualities, mind and Deity become inseparable form consciousness. The *nisus* or the eternal urge of Alexander ought to be a spiritual drive or aspiration for the attainment of the consciousness of perfection. It cannot be an unconscious effort, for unconsciousness and perfection have nothing in common. The *nisus* is not the product of the universe, but its source, meaning and value.

If Deity is not yet evolved, religion does not exist. There cannot be a *nisus* for some nebulous probability whose nature and existence are yet undetermined. The spiritual experiences of the saints would then be unhealthy dreams and our hopes for eternal satisfaction would be a question of chance occurrence. Alexander wrongly attributes the process of the evolution of individual and phenomenal characters to the essential Reality. The natural limitations which mark out the province of the operations of human understanding in general are responsible for our ignorance of the basic Reality which is not a product of evolution. What is created in time is subject to change and destruction. If nothing eternal is ever

possible, our secret aspirations are swept away in the movement of time and our deepest convictions get brushed aside in a groping towards something one knows not what. One cannot know that there is emergence of a thing if something does not relate that thing to what precedes it. The emergent products are not neat parcels packed in different boxes but form a continuity of unfoldment of a supreme creative spirit. There cannot be mere jumps without something that jumps. The Absolute is not Space-Time but the eternal Consciousness.

Alexander's view that the God of religion is the whole universe with a *nisus* for Deity makes out that the universe is the body of Deity. But this Deity does not determine the universe; the universe determines it. If it is possible for the religious mind to have a sympathy with or a feeling for the whole, it must participate in universal existence and anticipate in its own being the existence of Deity. The Deity should be implied in the universal mind, and be a realisation of its potentiality. The Vedanta teaches that, to the individual, the universe appears as real and so it feels a meaning in evolution. But in fact the Supreme Being is logically prior to the individual, the universe and the fact of evolution. Alexander's view is an empirical observation of the individual's superficial experiences. Such a view is oblivious of the more profound truths which are hidden in these experiences and which alone can account for their consistency and significance. In cosmic creation there is a reversal of the order of individual experience. In the latter, reality begins with diversified sense-perceptions, while in the former it starts from unified consciousness. Reality need not be bound to what we know through sensations and ideas. The visible is rooted in an invisible essence which is the start as well as the finish of our efforts.

The future may be undetermined from the constricted point of view of the creatures that are being carried by the winds of perpetual change. But, if we can ascertain a

standard of the behaviour of things by inference from observations of the past, why can it not be that such a determined order exists in the future, too, though we are unaware of it at present? The order of emergences in the universe is ruled by the law of an eternal presence which shines at the heart of all things, and the whole process of evolution is a long history of the self-realisation of this Divinity at different levels of the manifestation of consciousness. In the drama of life are enacted the various phases of Spirit which masquerades in beings as the unseen seer of all thoughts and actions.

ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD

Alfred North Whitehead occupies a place in the history of Western philosophy which makes his importance comparable only with that of the great masters—Plato, Kant and Hegel, who gave to mankind monumental systems of thought. Whitehead conceives the universe as an organism, a process, to understand which our notions of things, entities, substances, and of place and time have to be completely overhauled and transformed. We are generally accustomed to think that material bodies are located at particular points of space and instants in time, and that no other body can occupy those points of space at that time. This idea of what Whitehead calls 'simple location', which falsely tries to explain things without reference to other regions of space and time, is bound up with the common belief that causation is the production of an effect by a cause which precedes it in time. Whitehead's criticism is that a causal relation between two things is incompatible with their simple location, for two things which are separate from each other cannot bear a causally binding relation between themselves. Causation as it is ordinarily understood implies that a knowledge of the cause should give us the knowledge of all its effects. This is impossible if we persist in believing that things and events are separated from one another. If the simple location of events is a fact, even inference would give us no knowledge of the inferred events, for inference requires that the events from which we infer others should have an 'inherent reference' to the inferred events in order that they may give us knowledge of these latter; but such a reference is absent between events that are really different from each other. Memory of the past, too, would not be possible if all events are utterly cut off from one another in space and time. Our experiences oblige us to give up the belief in the simple location of things and events. There do not exist disconnected bodies or events at different points of space or moments in time.

If, then, events are not separated from one another, how can we distinguish between a cause and its effect, between the events from which we infer and those which we infer? Whitehead's answer is: By admitting a process that lies between all things, a process in which things themselves become parts of the process, a continuous flow of events, which takes us to the conception of the universe as an organism, a system in which every part influences every other part, every event is pervaded and interpenetrated by every other event. It is impossible to find anywhere in the universe isolated objects existing by themselves statically in space and time.

The theory of organism provides a solution to the problem of the relation between mind and matter. We are wont to think that mind and matter are two distinct facts of experience influencing each other in some way. But how can any mutual interference be possible if they are separated from each other? The problem can be solved only if mind and matter interact by a relation of process. Nature flows into the mind and flows out transformed by it into the objects of perception. Here, neither of the two is more real than the other. The perceiver and the perceived form one continuous process. There are no subjects and objects differentiated from one another. The perceived universe is a view of itself from the standpoint of its parts that are modified by the activity of its whole being. There is a continuity of process between mind and matter.

The relation of substance and its qualities, too, as it is generally understood, presents great difficulties. We cannot say how qualities inhere in a substance; we do not know whether they are different or identical. The usually accepted view is that substances are featureless things possessing only primary qualities, to which the secondary qualities are imparted by the knowing mind. Then there remains nothing in Nature except motion, which appears as light when it impinges on the retina and as sound when it strikes the ear-

drum. The world, says classical physics, consists of mere electrical charges, having no colour, no sound, no beauty, no good, no value, nothing that we call a world. The world is in our minds. What is real is electrical force, mathematical point-events, symbols and formulae. And what of aesthetic, ethical and religious values? Science has no such things as these. We also know how Locke's distinction of the primary qualities from the secondary ones led to the astonishing conclusions arrived at by Berkeley and Hume. Whitehead points out that classical science discovers a featureless universe because of the notion of simple location of things. It committed the mistake of abstracting things and events from their relation to others, and substances from the qualities which characterise them. The remedy is the acceptance of a universe of organic relations, where all facts, meanings and values are conserved without contradicting sense, reason and experience, and in which all spatial otherness and temporal distinction is overcome in a system of universal mutual reference of things and events. Space, time and events are organically related to each other; nothing can ever exist as isolated from other existences.

Whitehead learns from Hegel that all things and events are *internally related* and that to abstract them from their environment or their context in the whole would be to misrepresent them totally and to conceive them as what they are not. Matter is a group of agitations of force which extends its body to the entire universe and constitutes its stuff. The configurations of this force are called bodies or events and their existence and nature determine everything. Things are without limits or boundaries, they really exist everywhere, at every time, in every way. We cannot pluck a leaf from the tree and know what it is to the tree, or cut a part of the human body and know how it works as its organ. The bifurcation of an event from other events, of substance from its attributes, of cause from its effect, of mind from body, of things from the rest of the universe is a deathblow given to all right knowledge. Whitehead propounds a philosophy

based on the scientific theory of relativity. The result is the novel concept of the organism.

Whitehead's universe as an organism is governed by the law of *internal relations*. All things are all other things in every condition, and the relations themselves are not independent of the things. Now, we have to give up the habit of using the words 'thing', 'entity', etc. while studying Whitehead, for he has pointed out that our ideas of thinghood are bound up with our notions of simple location involving what he calls the 'fallacy of misplaced concreteness'. What we call a thing is for him a set of agitations of force, a group of activity or energy, a configuration of process or motion, and he calls such a bit of process an 'actual occasion'. We shall, however, for the sake of convenience, apply this term to things in general or objects of our experience. Sometimes, Whitehead calls these actual occasions 'drops of experience'. These names given to the material of the objects of common perception are to bring out that they are not isolated entities but currents of teleological process, continuous with all things in the universe. No part of the process can be abstracted from the others and studied correctly. Every actual occasion involves every other, and to know any one is to know the whole universe. Actual occasions are spatio-temporal aspects of process, a nexus of which we call an object. An object is nothing but a continuous process of actual occasions as we experience them in their externalised condition. There is no fixed object anywhere. An event is a series of actual occasions revealed in perception as demonstrated in a molecule for a few moments. Objects are more complex formulations of such events. The objectness of an object is in its capacity to be experienced in perception.

Every actual occasion is sensitive to the existence of others, and thus to the entire universe. All actual occasions take account of each other, and in some way, subtler than even sense-perception, 'perceive' each other. There is a kind

of pervasive ‘feeling’ of every actual occasion for the others in the universe. Whitehead uses the word ‘feeling’ in quite a different sense from the one in which we are used to understand it, and makes it more fundamental than the conscious level of the mind in waking life. This feeling is a natural sympathy which the actual occasions have for the whole, a general connectedness and unity of the universe which they reveal in themselves by the very fact of their constitution. This rudimentary feeling or experience is, to Whitehead, of the nature of unconscious ‘prehension’ or taking into relation of the other actual occasions, a grasping of the characteristics of every aspect of the universe. The prehensions may be positive absorbings or negative rejections of aspects. The actual occasions are thus related both in physical and mental life; the two are not features of distinct orders of being. The process is feeling and reality, and the energy of physics is but what we feel within ourselves as minds, a feeling in our own constitutions as actual occasions for the indivisible process which is the universe. Every actual occasion represents and feels a situation of the entire process, and its very existence is due to the contribution of the rest of the actual occasions; it is produced by the whole universe by way of integration of characters, which Whitehead calls the process of ‘concrescence’. An actual occasion is called more precisely a ‘prehensive occasion’, for it has no existence independent of its prehensions.

Whitehead speaks of an ‘ingressive’ evolution of the actual occasions from possible forms of experience which are known as ‘eternal objects’. The eternal objects ‘ingress’ into the formation of actual occasions. These eternal objects are not concrete existences but abstract possibilities of the evolution of the actual occasions. The universe of our experience is the result of the ingression of one of infinite sorts of eternal objects which have not all been actualised in this particular realm of spatio-temporal events. The manner of the selection of particular kinds of eternal objects for

ingression is similar to that in which certain actual occasions contribute to the birth of the other actual occasions in varying ways of relation, which are known as the 'relevances' of these actual occasions to others. The actual occasions determine themselves by physical prehension of other actual occasions and by conceptual prehension of eternal objects. The eternal objects, therefore, are not different from the actual occasions, though distinct in nature, and even when not actualised form part of the process of the universe and influence everything by way of negative prehension. The laws of Nature are the relatively stable expressions or modes of its behaviour in relation to actual occasions that appear at a given time. As the universe evolves in time, its laws must change with its modified relation to its evolved parts.

God, says Whitehead, is finally responsible for the selection of specific types of eternal objects for ingression into the actual occasions and for giving the universe a specific *actual* character different from the many other *possible* ones. God is the 'principle of limitation', for He limits the actual occasions to only a few of the infinite possibilities or patterns of process that may characterise numberless universes. God transcends the universe of process, for what determines the process cannot itself be involved in the process. We cannot conceive of any reason why God should have imposed on the actual occasions a particular kind of limitation and actualised this universe rather than any other. Whitehead says that there is a directing influence immanent in an actual occasion, called by him the 'subjective aim' of the actual occasion, which makes it what it is. Whitehead is not clear about the ultimate nature of this subjective aim, though we may regard it as an expression of the impulse to advance in evolution. The Vedanta would identify this subjective aim with the aspiration of the universe to realise its perfection in the Absolute which is immanent in the actual occasions and the eternal objects. Whitehead, perhaps, would hold the same opinion, for God and the universe, according to him, are mutually immament and interpenetrative, though God stands

above the universe as the principle of its limitation. God is the universal aim of the activity of the actual occasions, in whom they envisage their highest possibilities. All the values of life are recognisable in God who is the non-temporal ideal determining the actualities of the temporal realm. God does not create the universe, but makes it possible by the process of limitation, and hence He is not responsible for the evils of relative life. Evil is the result of short-sighted activity centred in selfish purposes wrenched from the universal aim.

But Whitehead does not regard his God as identical with the Absolute. God is for him a 'non-temporal accident'. If God is one of the accidents, he cannot be the cause of the accidents which constitute the temporal universe. God has to be conceived in more satisfactory forms in order that He may determine the universe. If, by the accidental God, Whitehead means a cosmic principle akin to the Ishvara of the Vedanta, who is accidental in the sense that he is relative to the constitution of the particular universe of which he is the lord, God has to presuppose a Reality which ranges beyond accident and relativity. Whitehead's God becomes a 'consequent', an effect, related to the evolving process, and so cannot be saved unless He becomes a manifestation of the Absolute which is beyond creation. This crown of all philosophy appears to be missing in Whitehead's system, though we may suppose that he would have no objection to taking it as implied.

The criticism of the commonsense view of causation advanced by Whitehead agrees with that levelled by the Vedanta against the notion of the production of an effect from a cause separated from it. The effect cannot be different from its cause, for it is not independent of what constitutes its cause. It is not identical with its cause, for, then, we would have to abandon the concept of effect and abolish causation itself from the scheme of things. But Whitehead's process does not fully solve the problem of causation, though it overcomes the shortcomings of the classical theory of the

production of certain static entities from other static entities which are anticedent to the former in time. We cannot conceive of a process without spatio-temporal relations; and if space and time are not absolute, process cannot be reality. Process is the nature of the universe as presented to the observation of actual occasions which are falsely abstracted from the rest of the universe. But without this abstraction there cannot be observation or objective perception of the process. And, if the abstraction or the isolation of actual occasions from the other aspects of the universe is false, the experience of the universe as a process, too, becomes false, in which case the identification of process with reality is a falsification of reality. We never know process as what is not experienced, and the experience open to us is in terms of an abstraction of ourselves from the whole. Thus process turns out to be a relative appearance of a reality which is more fundamental. The Vedanta identifies this reality with the immutable consciousness immanent in all processes and yet transcending them. There is the procession of actual occasions because of a reality which does not move with the procession. Whitehead requires to relegate his process to phenomena, and to reconstruct his concept of reality. The process may be real to us, finite beings, but is not real in itself.

If matter and life are fundamentally one, as Whitehead holds, the whole universe gets animated with feeling and experience. We have then, it is implied, to abandon the notion of inert matter and endow the universe with a limitless life which has to be equated with its reality. This life cannot be a process, for we have seen that a process needs some other support for it to appear. Life cannot be mere vital force, for the latter is a process of organic existence. It cannot be mind, for it, again, is a process of ideas. We are forced to return to a universal being underlying even mind, whose essence is consciousness. Matter, life and mind are the different grades of the expression of the Absolute in the region of space-time. They are comprehended in its essential

being where they step beyond their distinctness of structure and realise themselves in truth. The Absolute is being and knowing.

The world of physics is the body of the *Virat* as perceived by spatio-temporal subjects. Science cannot concern itself with the inner significance of aesthetic, ethical and religious values, because it is busy with what is observed through the senses, and not with the factors that condition all observation. The latter become the subjects for study in philosophy. Values are not in things, the things are shells that cover a living principle in them; and it is the things that engage the attention of science. Value is the effect which consciousness produces in us when it envisages objects. The universe by itself has no sympathy with values, for it works mechanically when viewed as a sense-object. This happens because in sense-experience the object is abstracted from the consciousness which informs it. Matter appears to consist merely of electrical charges and form just a kink in the continuum of space-time, because the scientist in his observations disregards the existence and constitution of his own personality. Science studies abstractions, not wholes. No wonder, it discovers a corpse instead of a living beauty. To study a piece of mineral or the leg of a frog is not to participate in the miracle of life. The meaning of existence is disclosed in ourselves, not in what we merely see. God peeps out in tiny man, and that dust of a frail body houses a Spirit which encompasses the universe. The eternal in us refuses to be neglected in our activities, and demands a careful attention by which we can listen to the voice of the highest heaven. The clatterings of the senses are silenced by the music of Divine. Science has to return to philosophy to put on life, and philosophy has to look within to gain its soul.

The unconscious prehensions of Whitehead are really the tentacles with which conscious life feels its own parts in its evolution towards Godhead. The various degrees in which consciousness reveals itself are the forms of the mutual

reaction of the phenomenal subject and the object. Consciousness hides itself in matter, breathes in plants, dreams in animals and wakes up in man, though it does not become fully self-conscious even in man. This process of gradual manifestation is valid only in individual existence. In cosmic being it is all an instantaneous illumination of all grades of life. The exigencies of individual experience, however, find it indispensable to extend to the cosmic scheme the scale of the gradual rise of consciousness in different orders of being and to make the cosmos the body of God. But these are explanations of life and accounts of experience as cast in the mould of our own make-up. Reality has no degrees in itself; there are degrees only in our perception of it. Unconscious prehensions are the conscious reaches of the Absolute through the sleeping individualities of the actual occasions. Consciousness cannot rise from unconsciousness unless it is already present in the latter, though veiled. Prehensions when brought about by the sheer force of the necessity of the interdependence of aspects of existence may be unconscious, but they are not so essentially when the aspects become alive to their positions in relation to the universe.

Both for Whitehead and for the Vedanta, God is not the author of evil in creation. For Whitehead this is true because God is not the creator but the principle of limitation, who provides the conditions necessary for the manifestation of the universe. It does not mean, however, that there exists, as Whitehead supposes, any primordial material stuff independently of God, or that God is an efficient cause differentiated from a material cause. God is the efficient, instrumental, material, formal and final cause—all in one. But God appears as consciousness and also a stuff of creation when He is viewed in an empirical abstraction. The Vedanta explains the nature of the present universe as determined by the nature of the latent potencies of the unliberated individuals lying in an unconscious state at the end of the previous cycle of creation. The universe is nothing but a field

of experience for the individuals that constitute it. Without the potencies of these contents, the universe is nothing. The good and the evil of life are both expressions of these potencies actualised in experience. God, therefore, has nothing to do either with good or evil. He is not grieved at our sins, nor does He rejoice over our virtues. He does not create agency or action, nor does He bring about the fruits of action. But He appears to do all these when we, as finite beings, try to understand His ways. Whitehead does not find any reason for the particular type of limitation that God has introduced into the universal scheme. The Vedanta makes out that the form of this limitation depends on the dispositions of the latent principles to be manifested in the shape of the universe. God is the light whose mere presence rouses the potencies to activity and self-evolution.

THE NEO-HEGELIANS

The main trend of the arguments put forward and the conclusions arrived at by a group of bold thinkers, who are usually known as the Neo-Hegelian idealists, and whose avowed purpose was to construct a powerful metaphysical system originating in the critical idealism of Kant and founded on the logical absolutism of Hegel, are perhaps the greatest approximations of Western thought to the all-comprehensive philosophy of the Vedanta. The arguments of these idealists cover very extensive fields and do not always follow the same method. They admit of differences among themselves regarding certain essential points and come not to identical views in regard to the nature of Reality, though they are all ultimately idealists of the Hegelian type in one way or the other. Some of these system-builders actually attempt to rise beyond Hegel by their originality and reorientation of the idealistic tradition. We shall however confine ourselves here to a discussion of the views of the more advanced among them, whose doctrines come nearest to the Vedanta. Their fundamental teachings lead more or less to the view that Reality is an all-embracing Absolute-Consciousness, that all objects of experience, including the subjective minds, are comprehended in this Consciousness, and that the Absolute which is the whole determines its parts by the law of internal relations.

The general position of the more prominent among the Neo-Hegelians is that mind and matter are correlative aspects of Reality and do not have independent existence. The Absolute, they hold, is a harmonious unity in which all contradiction is reconciled, transmuted and absorbed. The subject and the object have a meaning only in so far as they are related to each other as aspects of this universal whole. The perception of objects by the subject is not really the movement of thought outside itself but the recognition of its own universal nature in regions which remained hitherto undiscovered, and thus perception constitutes a kind of self-expansion of the subject. Life's unrest is really a spiritual

unrest, an indication of the need to realise what one is not now actually but is potentially, to aspire to experience the Absolute. Every finite entity tries to grow towards its self-completion in this highest being. This unrest explains all the activities and processes of the universe at all times. The yearning for the whole cannot cease in the parts, for their true self is the whole.

The finitude of beings is not their full explanation. Every finite object is inextricably related to that which causes its limitation. Finitude is not self-existent but is determined by the presence of other finite objects. Such finites are infinite in number. Any particular finite is determined in an infinite relevence to the rest of the universe and has the principle of its negation imbedded in itself. Thus a single experience includes within itself the infinite and the finite, the former by implication and the latter by feeling. The finite struggles to be rid of its finitude and is continuously engaged in the act of overcoming itself in the infinite. Nothing that is finite can be real, for it has a tendency to outgrow itself in a consciousness that surpasses all finite existences. The infinite consciousness is not merely a collection of finites, but an indivisible whole which transcends the finites in every way and constitutes an organic completeness. The infinite is eternal, Reality, the Absolute. It is perfectly self-determined, nothing else can determine it.

Thomas Hill Green, a great pioneer in the movement of this interpretation of absolute idealism, argues that all relations, whether in sensation or perception, require to be synthesised in order to form contents of a single grasp of knowledge. This synthesis of the manifold of sensations and perceptions is impossible without a synthesising consciousness. Even the existence of the related terms cannot be accounted for without a non-relative consciousness that lies behind relations. This consciousness must be spiritual because it is supernatural, above the appearances of Nature. Consciousness cannot change, for, if it

does, it would have to be known by another changeless consciousness persisting through change; else we would end in an infinite regress in our search for the very possibility of a knowledge of change. Consciousness is eternal, for its cessation is inconceivable. If we can think of its cessation, our consciousness ought to survive its cessation, and we would again land in a deathless consciousness. Consciousness should also be universal, for it relates the objects of the whole universe. It is not merely *my* sensations and perceptions that are synthesised but also the various objects present in the universe. The consciousness that relates objects outside is not my personal mind, for the objects are out there independent of me. Hence, there must be a universal consciousness in which all objects and subjects are held together.

The natural or human consciousness is a limited mode of the supernatural Absolute. Man, as a finite organism, appears to be bound to the flux of the natural consciousness which works with sensations and perceptions. Here it is that he is constrained by necessity and subjected to the laws of the universe and of God. But the essence of man is spiritual consciousness which is the same as the eternal Divine Being. Here man is free and is not determined by any law. His law is the law of absolute freedom. For Green, the goal of life is Self-realisation. It is the highest good of man. The Absolute is revealed here as the universe, and so one can see it everywhere with one's eyes. All activity becomes, thus, a divine worship, a practice of religion in daily life.

Western metaphysical idealism reaches its consummation in Francis Herbert Bradley. His '*Appearance and Reality*' is a masterpiece of logical precision and dialectical skill. Bradley attempts to comprehend the universe as a whole, and not in parts or fragments. He examines a relative experience with its distinctions of primary and secondary qualities, substance and attribute, qualities and relations, space and time, causation, individual

self, etc., and finds that all its constituents are self-contradictory and thus rejects them as mere appearance. Relational categories end in a vicious circle. Terms and relations result in mere correlatives. There is no reality to be discovered in phenomena. The whole universe is phenomenal.

But appearances exist. They must have a basis. Rejection of appearances is at the same time an affirmation of Reality. That the contradicted is appearance proves that the non-contradicted is the Reality. All judgement implies a standard of truth. Any attempt to doubt or deny Reality turns out to be an affirmation of it. Even appearances must find a place in Reality, for they somehow exist. But they must exist in Reality in such a way that they do not contradict themselves. The being of Reality consists in harmonious experience. This experience is not personal or subjective but the essence of the Absolute. We have in us inklings of this experience in an immediate, undivided blending of thought, volition and feeling. This experience is prior to all distinction and difference and is given in the form of a 'this', a consciousness of a wholeness in which it is not divided into the 'that' and the 'what', the subject and the predicate. Bradley's experience is not the Anubhava or Sakshatkara of the Vedanta, but a unity of the functions of the psychological apparatus in an aboriginal feeling below the clear-cut distinction of the knower and the known that appears later in the operations of the intellect.

The Absolute is the satisfaction of our whole being and every aspiration and value has to find its fulfilment in it. It is the joy at once of intellect, will and emotion. It has no one-sided aspects, but is always complete in itself. It has no external differentiations. External differentiations would require their terms to be related in a larger whole of undifferentiated experience, or else they would lead to an infinite regress of relations. The finite modes of the Absolute are all *internally related*, and the relations determine the

terms related by being their essential aspects. Reality must be an independent, absolute Being realised in consciousness. This Being is neither the unknown nor the unknowable. It is not known in thought which has the habit of dissecting experience into the subject and the object. To know the Absolute, thought has to commit suicide. But the Absolute is known in an immediate presentation, a feeling of the nature of direct apprehension. Bradley is no mystic in any sense; he confines his 'immediate experience' to a function in us, finite beings, which may be said to be, in a way, the raw material of the psychological phenomena that present to us in their empirical state a mass of diversities. But, Bradley is about to stumble on the ground of the Vedanta when he says that the relational categories and functionings of the intellect give us a self-contradicting vicious realm of appearances, and that, though we cannot, therefore, know the Absolute through the logic of the intellect, we are forced to accept its reality in a consciousness which is non-relative and a whole. Kant and Hegel, too, had in them this immediacy of presentation in consciousness, on account of which they unquestioningly posited a transcendental unity of apperception and a trans-empirical Absolute, respectively, though they were disinclined to accept any kind of intuitive feeling due to their rigorous adherence to the laws of the intellect. Bradley recognises a deeper experience in which appearances are transmuted and absorbed to form a consistent system.

There are, however, a few difficulties which prevent us from identifying Bradley's Absolute with the Brahman of the Vedanta. Bradley conceives of Reality as a harmonious system, a unity in diversity. He does not rise to the thought that a system is a harmony of relations and that the consciousness that relates the terms of the relations cannot itself be a system of relations. Consciousness must be above relations, transcending the region of system which is valid only in the realm of space-time. Otherwise, the system of the Absolute would have to be built by another non-relational consciousness. Bradley says that the Absolute stands above

its internal relations, which means that it is not merely a harmonised system but pure being; rather Be-ness. Reality is not in need of appearances; and the idea of harmony and relation and system belongs to appearances.

When the related parts of the Absolute are included in its fullness, they are also transcended in it. Bradley retains in his Absolute some aspects of the Ishvara of the Vedanta and makes it not fully identical with Brahman. For Bradley the Absolute is unknowable by us, finite beings, but he does not show us the way to overcome our finitude and know it in its infinitude. His 'immediate feeling' is not the experience or realisation of the Absolute; it is merely a hint at the possibility of such an experience. The Vedanta has a perfect practical discipline and method for realising it in one's pure Self. The Absolute is directly known through profound reflection and meditation.

Intellectual logic attaches too much importance to the categories of relative experience and wants all appearance to be taken to Reality. The defect of logic consists not so much in differentiating the 'what' from the 'that' as in assigning to the 'what' a value independent of the 'that'. Appearances are not, as Bradley supposes, *transmuted* in Reality, but Reality in the consciousness of itself is divested of the relational vestures in which it is presented to the empirical mind. Appearance is not Reality, however much it may be transmuted. Appearance is the *objectified character* of Reality, and when this character is negatived in the immediacy of experience, it is not appearance that becomes Reality, but it is Reality free from objectification that knows itself as such.

The Neo-Hegelians, even such great leaders like Green and Bradley, do not free themselves from the notion that there is, somehow, some worth in the realm of relative perception, which has to be imported to Reality. Green thinks that there is no consciousness without object, no Absolute without the universe. The latter becomes necessary for the

former to be what it is. Bradley is willing to take appearance to Reality by a transmutation of values and a change in significance, and to be contented with a harmonious system of Reality. This is exactly what the Vedanta does while it fixes the position of the empirical individuals in Ishvara. But this technique will not be feasible when we judge the state of the individuals in Brahman. Brahman does not admit of any phenomenal category in itself, even by way of transmutation; it accepts only itself and nothing else. The universe is necessary for Ishvara; his universal consciousness requires a universal object. But Brahman exists in its own essence, it needs no objects in order to exist. Empirical consciousness cannot be without an object, and Ishvara is the highest empirical envisaged by us. But Brahman is metempirical and its reality is in its consciousness alone, independent of relations. Green does not notice this distinction, and Bradley unwittingly mixes up with the Absolute characters which really belong to appearance, though lifted up to a universal necessity. The necessity of thought need not be the constitution of Reality. A failure to take notice of appearance as only an abstract presentation of *objectifiedness* as distinguished from the Reality that underlies it is responsible for the attribution of empirical categories to 'That' which is by its own right, in its supreme independence.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY OF WESTERN THOUGHT

The inadequacy of the philosophic equipment of Western thinkers in comparison with the Vedanta system does not, however, mean that there is nothing good in them. Kant, Hegel and Whitehead are some of the greatest thinkers the world has produced and their monumental contributions to the fund of knowledge are indeed marvellous. They present different facets of the wisdom of the world and the part they play in chastening the human mind in its endeavour to know Truth is not only important but indispensable from the point of view of a student of clear thinking and logical approach to facts. These thinkers played a significant role in stimulating human understanding in the direction of its ultimate limitations and the realisation of its highest possibilities in its search for Reality. They tell us where we stand as embodied individuals and voice forth human dignity as also what is implied in its final reaches.

Kant's researches may be regarded as the foundation of modern critical philosophy and the turning point in the Western attitude to the nature of Truth. It was Kant who pointed out that we need not be overconfident of our faculties of knowledge and there are serious defects in their ways of working. He showed that we cannot see Reality with our eyes, for the senses are involved in the limitations of the space-time constitution. There is no such thing as sensing Reality as we see the things of the world. This is impossible, for our bodily structure is in space and time, which have the character of restricting the operations of anything existing or moving within their sphere. We cannot also think Reality, for the mind works in terms of the categories of quantity, quality, relation and modality, which have many controlling devices that restrain the mind from going beyond their limits. The moment the mind begins to think, it finds itself hemmed in by these categories from all directions and what the mind thinks is, thus, what the categories are. Like the frog in the well of the fable, the mind moves within the

framework of the categories and thinks that Reality is confined to their structure. Mathematics and physics cannot give us truth, because of the reason that they work on the hypothesis of the reality of space, time and the categories of thought. The conclusions of these sciences may be correct as far as the world of these structural limitations is concerned, and we may well follow their lead in our abidance with the laws of the environment in which we all live, for we can never discover that we are wrong as long as we are circumscribed by space, time and the categories which will not allow us to know what is outside them. Kant also bars us from having any insight into Reality with the aid of the reason in us, for the reason, he says, is again limited to the categories and cannot help forming a false conception of Reality in terms of the categories. There is, thus, no metaphysics of Reality in the sense of any right knowledge of it, for we are always within a phenomenal world, and our faculties of knowledge are also involved in it. Mathematics, physics and metaphysics are all good as laws of phenomena, but unhelpful in our knowledge of Reality.

Then, what can we know, in the end? Kant's answer is: Phenomena. We cannot know Reality, because we have no means which are outside phenomena. We are in phenomena and it is futile to imagine that with our intellectual equipment we can have even a glimpse of it. Kant's greatness comes out when he accepts that we would have known Reality if we had been endowed with what he calls an 'intellectual intuition', which, in his system, is knowledge independent of the categories of space, time and thought, but he does not feel that any human being can hope to possess such a faculty, for everyone is within phenomena.

This incisive analysis of Kant is wonderfully equipped to meet the self-complacent attitude which overestimates human powers and makes man live in a world of vanity and ignorance. Further, Kant's great work, *Critique of Pure Reason*, is a masterpiece of acute thinking, logical deduction

and honesty of approach in the human world, and it forms a necessary field of training for anyone interested in subtle thinking and comprehensiveness of argument. Kant does not deny the existence of God, though he holds that we cannot know him through our senses, mind and reason, for he postulates the existence of God on the basis of the moral urge for perfection surging within us. The affirmation of God, freedom and immortality is a subsequent phase of his thought, on different grounds. His study of the nature of human duty in society and the development of his thought on aesthetic beauty are important enough to engage the attention of any serious student of philosophy.

Another stupendous thinker is Hegel. His breadth of vision is supernormal, his passion for completeness breath-taking and the depth of his thought delighting to the soul. The spirit with which he starts narrating the story of the dialectical process of the Reason takes us above earthly vexations. As a true philosopher of great insight, Hegel attempts to bring the universe within a single fold of perfection as a wholeness which cannot brook any interference from outside. The Absolute has no outside, for everything is inside it. Every category in the universe has an opposite, every thesis is counterposed by an antithesis, for all things in it are parts seeking to find themselves in the whole. The thesis and the antithesis get blended in a synthesis which is a higher phase of reality in which the lower contradiction is overcome and transcended. The Absolute is implicit in every stage of this development, even in the lowest, as its vital essence and meaning. It is immanent in the thesis, antithesis and synthesis, equally, though it is revealed in a greater degree in the synthesis. This synthesis has, again, an antithesis in front of it, for it also falls short of the Absolute, and it forms the thesis in the face of this second antithesis. There is, again, a second synthesis in which the lower opposition is reconciled and a higher degree of reality revealed. But this second synthesis, too, has an antithesis, and the contradiction has to be solved in a still higher

synthesis. This process, called by Hegel, the dialectical movement of the Reason, continues until the highest synthesis of all things, the Absolute, is reached, as the Supreme Idea.

Hegel suggests, here, how everything in the universe is incomplete and insufficient, and yet is a phase of Reality. Everything is to be included, and nothing rejected, for all things are phases of the Absolute, in various stages of development in the process of Self-realisation in its experience. This is an immortal credit to the genius of Hegel, for, when carefully pursued, this suggestion can lead to the practice of universal love and sacrifice paving the way to perpetual peace among the nations. However, his deep understanding was not taken seriously by humanity, and today he is not even studied properly in many universities.

The dialectical process implies also the principle of 'internal relations'. Every stage and phase is connected with every other stage and phase in a way that everything is related to everything else in the universe, either implicitly in the lower categories or explicitly in the higher ones. The absolute is implied in everyone of its lower degrees and explicit fully in itself as the ultimate reality. We have already noticed the purport of these internal relations in some detail. This doctrine of Hegel is another masterstroke in the contribution of the human mind to world-solidarity. It tends to the bringing about of a togetherness of all creation and the abolishing of animosity, hatred and war among human beings. But here, again, Hegel's point has been missed by all people, and he has always remained too much for man's grasping power and appreciation.

The Absolute of Hegel is the grand culmination of every process in the universe—whether physical, psychological or spiritual. The dialectical process is not confined merely to the mind or the thinking faculty, though it reaches its perfection in the Absolute Idea. Hegel is careful to see that Reality does not end with mere Idea. The Idea which is the highest

synthesis of all lower opposition is also a thesis in relation to Nature or the universe of facts. Nature in its lowest form of presentation constitutes the astronomical universe, the stellar and planetary systems, the gross plane in which we live. The world of physics and chemistry is subtler and should be regarded as nearer to reality than the astronomical world. But life does not manifest itself even here and it begins its first revelation of itself in the biological world. While the laws of mathematics apply to the world of astronomy and of physics, the law of internal sympathy, of cohesion and mutual union reigns in the realm of chemistry. But in the stage of the biological life of beings, something more is made manifest, viz., the incipient stage of the revelation of Reason, which at this stage is called life. The higher stage is that of mind and here we find ourselves in the realm of psychology. Hegel takes us, now, from Nature to Spirit.

The Absolute Idea as the thesis and Nature as the antithesis are synthesised in the Absolute Spirit as the final synthesis. The Spirit manifests itself in the subjective, objective and absolute phases. The subjective spirit is the field of mental processes envisaged in psychology. Hegel presents an illuminating discourse on the structure and working of the human mind and discloses how it gradually unfolds itself in the process of development into higher phases of reality, and how there is meaning in every act of thought and significance in every situation in mental life. The study of the human mind is not complete unless it is able to reconcile the contradiction that is seen between thought and practical life in the world. With this in view, Hegel expounds the nature of the objective spirit which manifests itself as the principles of ethics, social contract, politics, government and law. All these principles are ultimately regulated by the law of the Absolute which requires that its immanent presence in every stage of life is recognised in the light of the highest perfection of an all-comprehensive *internal relation* of the structure of the universe. Human conduct, political

legislation and the art of government are all to be consistent with the truth that the Absolute is all things and everything in the universe is a partial revelation of it. If this profound teaching of Hegel had been implemented in the lives of the nations, the world would have, perhaps, realised its dream of finding a heaven on this very plane of apparent discord and strife.

The subjective and objective spirits are reconciled and transcended in the Absolute Spirit. Hegel points here to a deep secret that our psychological and social lives are aspects of a higher reality and cannot be rightly interpreted or understood except in the context of a universal truth which embraces them in a sublimation of isolated parts and a transfiguration of individual values. The Absolute realises itself as the Supreme Spirit and it can be visualised partially in art, religion and philosophic contemplation. Though Hegel is not familiar with the spiritual meditations of Yoga or Vedanta, and has not understood any of their implications, his thoughts almost touch this point of elevated reasoning. Beauty is the visualisation of the Absolute through the senses, in its partial manifestations; and art is the way of seeing this perfection through the medium of sensory instruments. Religion envisages the Absolute as an 'other', a God to be adored and worshipped. But in philosophy which is the highest meditation of the human mind, the Absolute is realised in its truth, as it is, and here the need for the perception of beauty through sense and for the practice of religion as a worship of an external God is no more felt, for the Absolute is integral experience.

Hegel's information on the religion of India is distorted and defective, and his definition of philosophy as the last phase of the Spirit requires amendation. But, nevertheless, he was a great thinker, and makes suggestive remarks which can themselves act as correctives to his own system.

The philosophy of Whitehead combines aspects of the metaphysics of Hegel with the discoveries of the scientific 'Theory of Relativity'. He is the most difficult of Western philosophers, both in expression and thought, for the ways of his argument are a novelty of his own. Like Hegel, he expounds the interpenetration of all things, and teaches the relativity of the universe as the totality of mutually determining configurations of force. For Whitehead, there are no things, localised bodies or objects which are really cut off from one another. Every object of the world is a collocation of forces, a vortex of energy, a point of concentrated motion, which enters into other such centres of energy to cause an 'ingressive evolution' of themselves perpetually. His criticism of the belief in 'simple location' takes us to the larger circumstance of the universe and makes us citizens of creation as a whole. The barriers of personality, society and nationality are crossed in the ocean of becoming which life is in reality. We begin to inherit the wealth of the cosmos as 'actual occasions' which bear relations to the farthest regions of existence. Here Whitehead shakes hands with Hegel and establishes on earth a kingdom of universal abundance and prosperity. What lies between things is not empty space but a living process which is everywhere the same. We can touch the things of the antipodes without moving a bit physically, for we are there already as the waters of the ocean are everywhere in it. Whitehead's concept of causation, his understanding of the notion of inference, and his new interpretation of the relation between mind and matter are a high watermark in the history of philosophy. His critical estimate of the views of modern science marks him out not only as a great scientist but also as a great philosopher. We have here to refer back to our appreciation of his analysis presented earlier.

Whitehead, by his theory of 'actual occasions' or 'drops of experience' takes us beyond ourselves to the boundaries of the vast universe. We are made to outgrow ourselves in experience and reach up to others living in the other parts of

the process of becoming. His concept of 'eternal objects', a quaint phrase invented by him, is a memory of the Ideas of Plato and sounds like the Vedanta doctrine of subtle bodies (*linga-sarira*) which inform the physical patterns as visible bodies. His pregnant expressions, like 'relevance' and 'prehension' convey a meaning suggestive of deep philosophic insight. Whitehead, without stating it openly, hints at the existence of the Absolute by his view that matter and life are fundamentally one, and life is experience.

While Kant, Hegel and Whitehead may be regarded as the most mature thinkers of the West, the other leaders of thought cannot be set aside as entirely irrelevant. Schopenhauer highlights that seamy-side of life which the aristocratic philosophy of Hegel ignores as pointless. The fact of suffering and sorrow has nowhere found such powerful expression and pleading as in Schopenhauer. While the system of Hegel reached the well-to-do in life, the voice of Schopenhauer was eagerly heard by the poorer people. If Hegel is the exponent of an all-round perfection, Schopenhauer is the advocate of all-round suffering and pain. Schopenhauer touched a vital issue in human life and became famous as the philosopher of pity. His monumental work, '*World as Will and Idea'* is no less appealing than either the Critique of Kant or the Logic of Hegel. They present different aspects of truth, which require patient hearing. The transiency of life, the universality of suffering and the need for getting rid of it are important teachings of idealist thinkers and spiritual mystics both in the East and the West.

Nietzsche's craving for power is not merely a megalomania but a light thrown on one aspect of human life. It is not necessary that everyone should be a philosopher, but it is necessary that every event of life should find an explanation in a satisfactory philosophy of life. The desire for food, sex and power expresses a basic instinct. Philosophy has not only to appreciate its true position but explain it with reference to the goal of life. The ego of man searches for

power and seeks to dominate over others. This is a phase in the development of our individualities. Our worth would lie in detecting its proper context and transmuting it in a more inclusive understanding. The pragmatism of James, again, is true to facts of empirical life and is a science of psychology. Life in the world demands a recognition of its values and does not want them always to be transcended. We have to call a spade a spade. James appeals to the practical sense of the human mind and would not tolerate any violation of its principles. Every prophet has to confine himself to the needs of his times, since speaking too much would not fulfil these needs. We have to take every teacher in the context of his place, time and circumstance and then study him with dispassion. To wrest him of these factors and judge him from the standpoint of our present-day developments would be doing injustice to him and disfiguring truth at a particular level. James came as a remedy for overstatements and arm-chair philosophies which did not take empirical life into consideration. He emphasised utility of values and encouraged practical enterprise as against mere theorising which does not help one in life.

Bergson, like Schopenhauer and James, is not only an adept in expression and a master of the literary art, but an able thinker of all times. His theory of biological evolution explains the facts of growth in the living organisms and makes out that all life is such evolution. It is difficult to present in a short compass his insight into this side of the truth of the universe, a fact which presses itself forward into our presence every moment of our lives. His great contribution to the world of thought is the forceful emphasis that he laid on the need for intuition and the impossibility to grasp reality through the intellect. The defects of the rational process and the comprehensiveness of intuition do not find a greater protagonist in the West than Bergson. When philosophers through centuries relied on the powers of reason in knowing truth, Bergson turned the tables round and stressed the place of intuition as the only way to the

knowledge of truth. The reasoning process tries to connect disjoined elements of thought and reality, while intuition takes reality as a whole. He feels that even instinct is nearer to fact than intellect, for instinct is free from the vanities and artificialities of the intellect. Bergson would, perhaps, say that instinct illumined fully becomes intuition. While the intellect argues out reality, instinct feels it, though imperfectly. Though the faculty of intuition is not adequately defined or understood by Bergson, he took a definite step in that direction, which proved to be a monumental phase in Western thought.

Bergson's analysis of morality and religion is of great value. He regards religion as a defensive reaction of Nature against the selfishness of the intellect. The egoism and diffidence of the intellect are counteracted in religion. The fear of death entertained by the intellect is removed by religion which holds out the fact of immortality and future life. When the intellect feels powerless and depressed, religion enthuses it with the concept of the all-powerful God. The instinct of self-preservation gets ennobled and channelised rightly by the belief in the existence and work of God, as thereby life is redeemed from its characteristic selfishness. The higher religion is that of the saint who identifies himself with Reality. The saint loves all humanity as this love is included in the love of Reality. Morality is of two kinds: self-directed and outwardly directed. While the morality of the common man is a result of social restraint and compulsions of various kinds from outside, the morality of the saint is inwardly directed by the consciousness of Reality. This latter is a spontaneous expression of conformity to the essential fact of life.

Condensation of thought is likely to take away much of the value of the original. The importance of the work, *Space, Time and Deity,* in which Alexander expresses his arguments cannot be fully brought out in a review. Though there is much in him which may not appeal to the religious mind,

there is also, side by side, much that can only be the thought of a master-mind. The scientific value of his study of space-time is great. If Bergson is the philosopher of biology, Whitehead and Alexander are the philosophers of physics. The value of Alexander's contribution is not nullified by the defects of his system from the point of view of religion and spirituality. Like Schopenhauer and James, Bergson and Whitehead, Alexander presents a picture of reality, which is not false, though not complete. His points of view are deep with suggestiveness.

Green is a pioneer in the development of Hegelian thought in the direction of a sublime completeness. His dissection of the knowledge-process paved the way to the fulfilment of the system in Bradley. The study of the relations of the finite and the infinite elaborately worked out by Caird and Bosanquet is rich both in depth and vastness. While in Green is evident a fine religious spirit coupled with philosophical enquiry, Bradley's thesis is sharp with metaphysical acumen. Bradley comes nearest to the Vedanta, and Western idealism finds its best expression in him. A student of the Vedanta in its higher form is bound to be benefited by a study of these stalwarts of the West, who will supply him with the equipment of subtlety of reasoning, an irresistible logic of argumentation, and a confidence in one's methods, which is so indispensable to any genuine seeker of Truth.

Though the Western philosophers do not add to the wisdom of the Vedanta, they help in fortifying it with a powerful weapon against onslaughts from ill-informed sources. The logic of the West would be a good companion to the knowledge of the East. We need not be too eager to cherish either a fanatical adherence to what is ours or a contempt for what is alien. Knowledge is not the property of any community, and it has no national barriers. It succeeds when it is honest enough to accept what is of worth and substance, wherever it be found. India has gained much in

the art of political administration and social uplift by its contact with Western culture, which, again, is inclined to gather some superb treasure of universal interest in the ancient culture of India. The East and the West are seeking a common purpose, and it is not true that the 'twain shall never meet'. The sense of spiritual values has to rise in all humanity.

PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE

The aim of philosophy is right living. Genuine, real philosophy, worth its name, is expected to enable one to live the truest life possible—a life of wisdom, free from the imperfections by which ordinary unphilosophical life is characterised. Philosophy is neither an intellectual diversion nor an academic pedantry overlooking the facts of experience in the world; neither a feat of empty scholarship nor a mere hobby of the care-free mind; but the intelligent analysis of the immediate facts of life as a whole, an examination of the implications of experience, and a scientific theory evolved out from such wise meditations for the purpose of regulating the functions which are responsible for the various phenomena of the individual's consciousness. Philosophy is, therefore, the great art of the perfect life, a life where the common notion of it is transcended, and the Supreme Being, which is identical with existence itself, is realised.

In Swami Sivananda we find a powerful exponent of such a philosophy, the grand philosophy of the Vedanta, and we also find in him an ideal personage rooted in the experience of the Goal taught about by the Vedanta. His life and teachings are aglow with the beautiful synthesis of the different aspects which make up life in its integrity. The Vedanta of Sivananda is neither a dreamy, subjective, world-negating doctrine of illusion, nor a crude, sense-bound, world-affirming theory of societarianism. His philosophy is the one of the divinity of the universe, the immortality of the soul of man, which is identical with the Absolute Self, the essential unity of everything in the universe with this Reality. Towards this end, he steered the course of the lives of people, bearing in mind the various degrees of Reality in which human life is wound up from beginning to end.

The most unique and impelling feature in his teaching, which he always exemplified through his daily life, is that no part of life's experience is neglected or turned a deaf ear to by his philosophy. A philosophy which overlooks some

aspect or aspects is subject to the charge of being partial and incomplete and therefore not worthy of being regarded as a science of life. Swami Sivananda exhorts the aspirants after the highest end of life not to fight shy of the objective realities which stare at the face of even the majestic idealist. Every degree of Reality has to be paid its due; else it would rebel against the proud aspirant who has trodden over it with his eyes turned upwards. Swami Sivananda is the meeting point of the Upanishad wisdom with the practical man of the workaday world. The Vedanta does not shut its eyes to the heart-rending conditions filling earthly life, nor does it pass uncircumspect about the body and the mind with their downward pulls towards empirical life, though the province of the Vedanta is supermundane. The Vedanta is supermundane, not because it looks down in any way on the dreary earth with a transcendental egoism, but because it transforms and then embraces its fallen brother, the mundane life, in its bosom of an all-inclusive knowledge and love. Only, it will not embrace the brother unless he is transfigured by the magical touch of Divine Life. The universe is included in Brahman, when it loses its limiting characters of being a universe.

Swami Sivananda, with the stupendous experience of one who has dived into the core of life, teaches that the one Brahman appears as the universe in all the planes or degrees of its manifestations, and, therefore, the Sadhaka has to pay his homage to the lower manifestation before he steps into the higher. Sound health, clear understanding, deep knowledge, powerful will and moral toughness, are all parts of the process of the realisation of the ideal preached by the Vedanta. The importance of this picturesque life is well brought out when the Swami insists on an all-round discipline of the lower self. He has a song of "a little," whereby he teaches that a simultaneous development of the diverse sides of human nature is imperative. His Vedanta is not in conflict with Yoga, Bhakti and Karma. All these are blended together in his philosophy, as elements constituting

a whole, in the several states of its experience. "To adjust, adapt and accommodate", "to see good in everything", and to bring to effective use all the principles of Nature in the progress of the individual towards Self-realisation along the path of an integrated fusion of the human powers, are some of the main factors which go to build his philosophy of life. He was one of the most practical of persons that could ever be found, though he had his stand on the loftiest peak of absolutistic metaphysics. He was an idealist-realist, a philosopher-humanitarian, a strange mixture of contraries which seemed to find in him a loving mother who brings together her quarrelsome children. To love all, and to see God in all, to serve all, because God is all, to realise God as the identity of all in one fullness of perfection, are his main canons. His Vedanta is the culmination of wisdom, an expression of the realisation of Brahman attained through philosophical analysis which is made possible by the absence of the distractions of the mind, consequent upon devout worship of Ishvara. This devotion, again, is hard to attain without self-purification effected through the selfless performance of obligatory duties incumbent upon all persons without exception. He prescribes methods for overcoming and mastering the physical, vital, mental and intellectual planes of consciousness, in order to enable the aspirant to proceed with his *sadhana*, without impediments, towards his great spiritual destination, the realisation of the Absolute.

Swami Sivananda accepts the values of the different schools of philosophy as stages leading to and representing partial aspects of the philosophy of the non-dual Absolute. His philosophy is, therefore, *realism*: The physical universe is independent of individual minds; it appears material when viewed by the individuals, but is ultimately a mode of the spiritual Reality. It is *idealism*: The universe is an expression of the Cosmic Mind and the values of life are expressions of the individual minds. It is *empiricism*: The individuals receive sensations from the physical universe outside, which is independent of their thinking; God is above man and appears

as the universe. It is *rationalism*: The forms of individual knowledge are constituted of the nature of the individual mind, and even the whole universe is determined by the nature of the necessary and universal laws of the Cosmic Mind. It is *voluntarism*: The urges of the will dominate the individual nature and subject it to suffering; the cravings of the will in man restrict the functions of his intellect and make him rationalise the wishes buried in the unconscious bottom of his psychological consciousness, though the will can be overcome by the higher reason and discrimination. It is *dualism*: There is, as far as human life in the world is concerned, a difference between the sensible and the intelligible, matter and mind, individual and God, the actual and the possible, appearance and Reality, and one has therefore to follow the laws of the Universal which is above phenomena. Only in Self-realisation is this distinction abolished. It is *realistic idealism*: Nothing that is existent can be essentially other than Pure Consciousness. All existents are subordinate to it. The universe is dependent on the Real. God is the dynamic cause of the universe. It is *pragmatism*: the true has also a practical value. The world of sense is a practical reality (*vyavaharika-satta*), because it leads to successful action. The existence of Ishvara or the Overlord of the universe has to be admitted, and this hypothesis is indispensable to account for life. It is *indeterminism*: Man's essential nature is spiritual consciousness which is free and is above all determinations in the universe. It is *determinism*: The relative individual is limited to mind and body which are subject to the operation of universal laws. It is *evolutionism*: All things are products of development and tend to unfold themselves through several forward and backward movements in their final ascent to the Absolute. It is *phenomenalism*: The sense-universe is a realm of changing appearances or phenomena of the Real, and human knowledge is limited to these phenomena. It is *transcendentalism*: The Absolute is above the categories of the universe. It is *immanentism*: Ishvara is the indwelling and

animating principle of the universe. It is *agnosticism*: Reality is inaccessible to mere human thinking. It is *mysticism*: The Absolute is directly realised in spiritual intuition and being. It is *pantheism*: The stuff of the universe is not outside Ishvara. It is *theism*: Ishvara is the cause of the manifestation of the universe and rules it as its Lord. It is *Absolutism*: The Absolute is the only reality, and its essence is Consciousness. The universe and the individuals are its manifestations or appearances. It is *mechanistic*: Events follow the laws of space-time in the world of sense-perception and understanding. It is *teleological*: All motion and activity is directed by Ishvara, the final cause, who determines the universe by the law of His being to which the universe with its contents is organically related.

The Vedanta of Swami Sivananda accepts all philosophical theories, but with reservations, as different sides of truth, and not the whole truth. His Vedanta is a synthesis of all philosophies as well as a transcendence of them in a philosophy of the non-dual Consciousness which sublimates all existences in its supreme essence. True religion is the practice of this philosophy, and Sivananda's religion is a religion of the universe, applicable to all human beings, relative to their positions in the scale of the development of their consciousness. Faith, reason and experience, theory and practice, art and religion, service, love and charity, purification, reflection, meditation and realisation, go hand in hand in the philosophy and teachings of Swami Sivananda.

The Vedanta philosophy which the saint Sivananda propounds is a practical, living one, and not simply a 'theory' of the universe. It is not a theory, but the exposition of the nature of one's practical life. We find this kind of spiritual life brought to its ideal perfection in the life of Sri Krishna, and explained in the Bhagavad-Gita. Swami Sivananda is an example of this type, a type of exalted beings, to whom the Vedanta is a commentary on life, far from those who think

that philosophy is divorced from life, that the Vedanta is unconnected with the concerns of existence in the world. The Vedanta of Swami Sivananda is the science which opens up for one the true meaning and value of human endeavour, the significance of embodied existence in the realm of the experience, and enables one to lead a worthy and glorious life here for the purpose of rising to the blissful Absolute, in which the universe is realised as identical with one's Self, to which nothing other than the Self does ever exist, and as the result of which realisation the sage becomes the saviour of all beings.